Daily Report

Latin America

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NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

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Rio Group Foreign Ministers' Summit Opens 3 Apr

Colombia's Gaviria Speaks

PA0404154391 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 2 in Spanish 1730 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Report by Martin Gonzalez]

[Text] At this hour in the city of Bogota, the meeting of foreign ministers of the Group of Rio is just getting under way. The objective of the meeting is to define strategies in order to implement the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative and to discuss the large world economic blocs.

Today Colombia requested the unification of the Latin American peoples in order to face the new economic strategies devised by the United States and Europe in the wake of the Persian Gulf conflict. Upon the opening of the summit of foreign ministers of the Group of Rio a few minutes ago, [Colombian] President Cesar Gaviria said that the unification of Latin America is the only way to seek more harmonious development. He added that such problems as drug trafficking, corruption, and violence can only be resolved through joint actions.

[Begin Gaviria recording] Our America has no option but to unite. The integration and attainment of concerted agreements are the only path to creating prosperous and peaceful national societies. Our challenge consists of exerting influence so that the international order that will replace the cold war.... [changes thought] democracy, opening of markets, preferred technologies, energy security, and the investment of capitals. [end recording]

The foreign ministers of the Group of Rio will put together, between today and tomorrow, an agreement for the creation of a Latin American common market. This, coupled with the Andean Pact strategy, the Group of Three, and the newly created Mercosur [Common Market of the South] will allow these countries to compete more effectively and to have better perspectives for economic and commercial development.

[Begin Gaviria recording] We must also look toward the Pacific. Latin America cannot turn its back on a region that is becoming the fastest growing and most prosperous on the planet. It is necessary that we establish constructive talks with Japan and the other Pacific basin countries. [end recording]

Meanwhile, Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela, which form the Group of Three, reached new agreements and formed two new fronts of common work, namely environmental and ecological defense.

The summit of foreign ministers will end on 4 April in Bogota.

Uru[illegible]

PY0404155091 [illegible] 0000 GMT 4 M[illegible]

[Text] The Co[illegible] would be glad [illegible] Uruguayan For[illegible] said in Bogota. [illegible] cance to the tre[illegible] the presidents a[illegible] Paraguay, and U[illegible]

Gros arrived in B[illegible] will discuss the [illegible] international age[illegible]

He said there is [illegible] the members of [illegible] 31 December 19[illegible] tion. On the co[illegible] promote a direct [illegible] integration proc[illegible]

Human Rights G[illegible]

PY0504013591 [illegible] 4 Apr 91

[Text] Montevideo, 3 Apr (EFE)—The Latin American Human Rights Association (ALDHU) reported today that Chile is third on the list of South American countries affected by terrorism, behind Colombia and Peru.

This organization, which released a statement in Montevideo signed by its Secretary General Juan de Dios Parra, says: "The succession of terrorist attacks causing deaths, wounded, and property damage in Chile shows the existence of antidemocratic and violent groups."

The statement notes that the groups "are carrying out criminal actions to obstruct the institutional path toward democracy in that country."

According to the figures released by the ALDHU, since the democratic government was installed in Chile more than 100 terrorist acts have occurred such as bomb attacks, assassination attempts on military men and policemen, attacks on judges, and the recent murder of Senator Jaime G[illegible] of the opposition Independent Democratic Union.

In the face of th[illegible] deep concern o[illegible] Chile" and repud[illegible]

The ALDHU sta[illegible] also an achievem[illegible] therefore, those wh[illegible] must be considere[illegible] coexistence which [illegible] political scene."

Cuba

Castro Addresses 5 th Communist Youth Rally

[Article type illegible] /Speech by Cuban President Fidel Castro during a Union of Young Communists (UJC) rally in Revolution Square in Havana—date illegible/

[Text] Young people, comrades:

I always say that I am not going to speak and I always end up saying something. This is what I told the students on 17 March, the 30th anniversary of Secundaria. Many Students' comrades in recent days when they announced their congress. Yesterday, I spoke to the young people in the countryside and today we are saying the same thing: I am not going to speak. This is an excuse for the youths. Robertico, Robertico Robaina, first secretary of the UJC, should speak. When, I came here and saw this huge crowd, however, I understood that it was impossible for me to escape from the podium.

What should I say today after delivering so many speeches? I do not like to repeat ideas. I do not like to repeat words. Nevertheless, I believe we need to reflect a little today. When Robertico explained to me that they were thinking about announcing the sixth congress here in the square I asked him: Robertico, are you sure that the square is going to fill up? He said: The square is going to be full. We came here today and found the square full, and not only full but cr- -ded with extremely enthusiastic people. The rally wa.. formed without large mobilizations. The rally was formed without bringing the participants on buses. The rally was formed without mobilizing factories toward the square. The square has been filled with young people. The square has been filled with people arriving on foot, walking from various sectors of the city. We believe that this event constitutes a true political feat. This event constitutes proof of the prestige, the authority, and the influence of our UJC organization.

I believe that this event constitutes an honorable response during difficult times. We are not living through any other stage; we are not living through a period of bonanza. We are not living through a normal stage. We are living through difficult times. We are living in a difficult epoch. We are living in times of great difficulties. I believe that we are living in an exceptional time in the history of our fatherland. The ones gathered here are like those who fought against the tyranny of Machado. He, the ones who defeat the Batista tyranny. He, those who battled in the mid-1950's who were, he, those who, when many of you and so many were not born, were the revolutionary militia, armed to the teeth, and the Cuban armed forces, and fought in the Bay of Pigs. Or, this anniversary, will be marked this month. The ones gathered here today are the veterans of those who fought in the Escambray, and so, the ones who lived through the terrible and difficult days—but ones of unmistakable heroism—of the October crisis. The ones here are like the ones who accompanied Che [Guevara] in his dizzying battles and in his death.

The ones gathered here are like the ones who wrote extraordinary pages of internationalism. They are like those and were part of those who for almost 15 years remained in the People's Republic of Angola. They are like the ones who said in Cuito Cuanavale that that town would never fall into the hands of the racists. They are like the ones who advanced toward the southwest, the ones who defeated the invading forces, the ones who wrote the battlefields' glorious and unfadable pages.

The ones gathered here are like those who have known how to hold high the banner of the revolution, who have known how to maintain the security and independence of the fatherland. They are the ones or are like the ones who are now carrying out labor feats in the construction and agriculture contingents or in the factories by creating, innovating because of the material difficulties we are suffering today. They are the ones or are like the ones who in any field, such as culture and art, create and enrich the spiritual life of our people. They are the ones or are like the ones who at the research centers are surprising friends and enemies with their extraordinary achievements.

If I am going to say something about this generation of young people, of this generation of students, it is that at perhaps the most difficult time in the history of the Cuban revolution, at the most difficult time in the history of our fatherland, at the most difficult time for the international revolutionary movement, at the most difficult time for socialism, when imperialists are in good shape, when capitalists are having a good time, when triumphalism reigns everywhere, when many of those who said they were defending the socialist ideas collapsed when there is talk now of a market economy, although many do not even know what a market economy [illegible] many do not even want to hear the word [illegible] when many have become disoriented [illegible] when many have become confused [illegible] when many have become demoralized [illegible] when many have become skeptical [illegible] when many have become cowardly [illegible] when many have become opportunistic [illegible] when many have become careerists [illegible] when many have become corrupt [illegible] when many have become traitors [illegible] when many have become mercenaries [illegible] when many have become lackeys [illegible] when many have become [illegible] with higher wages than [illegible]

[Castro interrupts the crowd, who in Cuban revolutionary usage, is a matter of days and weeks. Unless

two years he spent 6, since the first collapse and terror of the Cuban revolution, more solid and invincible than ever. Applause Many people wonder why the revolution is growing why there is no fear in Cuban society and the people why there is no fear between revolution and the young people why there is no fear between the revolution and the young people between the revolution and the students. How much the enemy would have given to find the people unsure, to find our workers unsure, to find our young people and our students unsure.

The reason is very simple, quite simple. It is because this revolution is the revolution of our people. It is because this revolution is the revolution of our young people. It is because this revolution is the revolution of our students. We are the same thing, and we cannot exist stop being the same thing.

This is why in recent days we set forth an idea for each citizen, each combatant, each young person, each student. We exhorted them to think that they are the revolution, they are the nation, they are the nation's honor and dignity, they are the nation's [word indistinct]. This is because the revolution has never betrayed its banners. The revolution has never betrayed its ideals. The revolution has never betrayed its principles. That is the secret of this unity, this total identification of the revolution with the people, and especially the young people and students.

We should add some additional elements to this idea. We have just lived through the experience of the Persian Gulf war. We have just seen the use of sophisticated weapons, the most modern weaponry used by the imperialists against a Third World country. As I have already said, the leaders of that country made enormous mistakes. It is not necessary to repeat this. That problem could have, however, been solved without war. Imperialism wanted to impose war. It wanted to use its new weapons. It wanted to implant terror in the world. It wanted to show that it was boss, and it acted [words indistinct].

Just today the UN Security Council approved one more resolution, a monstrous resolution [word indistinct] that violates the agreements of the Security Council itself, that violates the very principles of the United Nations, because in fact the UN Security Council has become a tool of imperialist policy. As is natural, Cuba is one country that said no as it has done so many times in the Security Council [words indistinct] in which we [words indistinct] the Security Council [words indistinct] to say no to the war against Iraq. [words indistinct] Cuba

dreams that the difficulties that are arising—and even more difficult problems may arise—from the collapse of the socialist bloc or from the problems in the USSR, a country that today is striving to maintain its integrity as a great multinational state, a country that today is striving to stabilize itself, and a country that certainly has great problems ... [illegible] imperialism dreams that the consequences of these situations will bring such problems as to make it impossible for the revolution to endure.

Imperialism dreams that these problems will bring capitalism to Cuba again. They dream that the land will again become private property. They dream that the factories will become private property. They dream that the means of production will become private property. They dream that perhaps our capital and our cities will be filled once again with brothels, gambling dens, casinos, children without shoes, and beggars.

Perhaps they dream that here a nation can become accustomed to hundreds of thousands or millions of unemployed people. They think this can again be a country with illiteracy, without schools, without technological schools, without the health system that today is considered one of the best in the world. They dream of the absurd, crazy idea that the country could return to the past, to that past of injustice, inequality, racial and sexual discrimination. They dream of women again becoming a kind of property within society.

They dream of these absurd things, which perhaps the vast majority of you did not experience, but you understand it, you sense it. You see it in the rest of the capitalist world. They try to seduce people with their absurd consumer societies. There they have accumulated wealth stripped over the course of centuries from the Third World. Capitalism has not created anything but luxury and unheard-of waste of the earth's natural resources, to create extremely rich societies where of course not everyone is rich. There are many without homes and there are beggars. There are many calamities.

What capitalism has brought the world during centuries of colonization and neocolonialism and exploitation is 4 billion human beings who live in poverty [as heard], 4 billion human beings, and every day 40,000 children die, 40,000 children who could have been saved. The worst atrocities, the worst humiliations, the worst injustices, the worst crimes, unbearable suffering are what capitalism has brought the world. If you don't know what capitalism is, you can find out by looking at the statistics concerning those countries. Take, for example, [illegible] countries that have left the socialist camp, countries that have left the Third World community.

A Third World country, like Cuba, experienced all that. A country that was subjected to the most criminal blockade in history, a country that was subjected to all kinds of aggression, a country that was subjected to all kinds of economic difficulties, a country that was subjected to all kinds of political pressures in this hemisphere, a country that was subjected to all kinds of diplomatic pressures in the world, a country that was subjected to all kinds of military threats, a country that was subjected to all kinds of terrorist actions, a country that was subjected to all kinds of biological warfare, a country that was subjected to all kinds of economic warfare, a country that was subjected to all kinds of political, diplomatic, military, terrorist, biological, economic warfare, a country that was subjected to all kinds of aggression, a country that was subjected to all kinds of blockades, a country that was subjected to all kinds of difficulties, a country that was subjected to all kinds of problems, a country that was subjected to all kinds of pressures, a country that was subjected to all kinds of threats

of thousands of bicycles, and if we have time we will distribute millions, in case it is necessary for everyone who can to go to work by bicycle. [applause]

That is, we are preparing for greater difficulties. That is why we must apply this principle of "I am the nation; I am the revolution; I am the country's dignity; I am the country's honor; I am the country's army" to all concepts because we are carrying a very great responsibility on our shoulders. We have a very important page of history to write. This page can only be written with the will to struggle and the will to overcome.

The most just ideas in the history of humanity are on our banners today. The most dignified position that anyone can take at this time in the world is our position. The difficult times will pass. Truth will open a way. The people will fight. The billions of human beings who are living worse and worse every day will become more and more aware and will fight more and more. Today the people are our fundamental allies. Journalists have come here at times to ask us if we are alone. I explain to them that we have not had so much sympathy among the people, we have not had so much admiration from people, because this very small country has resisted the Yankee embargo. It has resisted the Yankee threat.

When there were not yet problems in the USSR, and when the socialist bloc in Europe still existed, this had a great deal of merit. But for this country to exist, for this revolution to maintain itself when the socialist bloc in Europe has collapsed and the USSR has enormous problems, this really does constitute an unsurpassable page in the history of humanity. This really is a revolutionary nation. This really is a courageous nation. [applause] The Latin American nations, the world's nations, admire this courage. They admire this bravery. They admire this heroism. They admire the greatness of the Cuban nation.

Now we really are telling the world what Cubans are. For a long time they slandered us. They said we were not even independent. They said we were a satellite of the USSR. Today they can verify very clearly that we are satellites of principles. We are satellites of ideas. We are satellites of an ideal, which is like a sun of justice we revolve around and will always revolve around. History has given us the opportunity to show how independent we are. History has given us the right to proclaim that today we are the most independent country on earth.

If you do not believe that, look at what is happening in the United Nations. What are the great and small powers doing about the manipulations carried out there by the imperialist U.S. Government? Look at how there is one country that knows how to say no, one country that says no and will say no to the empire. This is one of the most glorious actions that has ever been done.

This is why when some journalist asked me if we were alone, I answered: Yes, we are alone, but at the top. [applause] I congratulate the UJC for its call for the congress, and I congratulate the UJC on its 29th anniversary. I congratulate the Pioneers, these children for whom we have to preserve socialism, these children for whom we have to preserve the revolution and the nation, [applause] so that they do not walk around without shoes, so that they are not left without schools, hospitals, or doctors, so that they are not left without teachers or books, so that they will not be beggars, so that they will not be prostitutes.

We have to think about these children every day and every night, this treasure of the nation for which we must be willing to give our last drop of blood. [applause] We congratulate our extraordinary young people, a product of the nation and the revolution. We congratulate our students for this event, this rally, this proof they are providing the world about what our people are and what our revolution is, for this proof that we have a people and youth with which to defend the revolution down to our last breath, with which to defend it until victory. [applause]

We congratulate the UJC leadership for this initiative, for their brilliant work. We congratulate Robertico for the excellent role he has played as a youth leader, for his brilliant speech, for his concepts and ideas, and for the firmness and optimism of his words. [applause] Although he did not say it, to conclude with that beautiful farewell by Che [Guevara], I will say it for him and for myself: Socialism or death, fatherland or death, we will win! Always towards victory! [applause]

UN Ambassador Votes Against Resolution on Iraq

FL0404161091 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Cuba has voted against a resolution on Iraq approved at the UN Security Council. This is considered the most severe, ambitious, and complex resolution ever approved to punish a member of the United Nations. The resolution authorizes the indefinite presence of U.S. and allied troops in the Persian Gulf region.

Ricardo Alarcon, Cuban ambassador to the United Nations, [words indistinct] of our country commented [words indistinct] with 12 votes in favor, one against, and two abstentions, failed to recognize [words indistinct] started last 2 August after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, it consists of the need for a definite cease-fire, the end of hostilities in the region, and the withdrawal of foreign troops, especially since they continue operations in an occupied part of Iraq without justification or right. [Words indistinct] the Security Council should already have lifted the economic sanctions against Iraq based on the specific conditions that had already been met.

Resolution 'Unacceptable'

FL0504020091 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 5 Apr 91

[Text] Ricardo Alarcon, Cuban ambassador to the United Nations, has made the following exclusive statements concerning yesterday's vote in the UN Security Council.

[Begin Alarcon recording] Yesterday, the Security Council took one more step on the shameful road it has been traveling since August, and which has turned it into nothing but a tool of U.S. policy. In addition, it has again acted in a way that clearly contradicts the provisions of the organization's charter, which is the document that the Council and the entire United Nations are obligated to govern themselves by.

The Security Council has assumed the power to set international borders, which is outside its scope and in itself is unprecedented. The Security Council has also taken upon itself judicial powers, the powers of a court, regarding the indemnization or reparations that should or could be made as a result of the Gulf war, in spite of the fact that the charter clearly establishes that the International Court of Justice is the only UN body with powers in this field.

In addition to this, the Security Council has not yet established an end to the hostilities in the Gulf, in spite of the fact that, as you know, the war ended more than one month ago. Still at this time, the Security Council has in fact repeated or confirmed, or extended the economic and trade embargo against Iraq, which is unjust and unjustified, since for some time now the reasons for which these economic sanctions were imposed have not existed. In addition, with this they are keeping the Iraqi people subject to conditions that the United Nations itself has described as catastrophic.

We think that all this is politically unacceptable, morally inadmissible, and legally intolerable. This is why the Cuban delegation voted against this resolution, and we can say that although we were the only ones to vote against it, we are sure that many countries... [rephrases] many representatives inside and outside the Council would have wanted to be able to represent countries that were capable of voting as Cuba was able to vote. [end recording]

Roa Kouri Alleges UN Charter Violations

FL0404200491 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1725 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Cuban Vice Foreign Minister Raul Roa Kouri has stated that UN Security Council Resolution No. 687 against Iraq contains a series of violations of the UN Charter and that vengeance is its purpose. On the subject of the Cuban vote against that resolution, Roa Kouri said that Cuba has always been and will be in disagreement with any project that could lend itself to whimsical reinterpretations of the UN Charter.

The resolution which was approved with 12 votes in favor, two abstentions, and Cuba's negative vote, establishes, among other things, the unilateral elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in the Iraqi arsenal and UN supervision of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti borders.

Commentary Sees Western Interference in Albania

FL0404165591 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1255 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Commentary: "Our Opinion" by Ariel Arizamendi]

[Text] The intelligence services of the Western countries, which over the years interfered in the internal affairs of the former socialist countries, have not changed their operational methods against those who do not meet their expectations or against those processes that do not give results which are in line with their strategic plans. If any country of the former socialist bloc, or one of a progressive nature, celebrates so-called open elections in the bourgeois democratic style and the leftist party remains in power, then they carry out a series of undercover activities against that country in order to prevent that party, which freely won the opportunity, from governing the nation. With the objective of displacing the parties of the left, even though they have dropped their communist tendencies, the intelligence services begin to manipulate the various social strata in accordance with the results of the electoral process. In this manner, the discontent, the unhappy youth, the lumpen, and those greedy for captalism act as the shock troops against the freely elected authorities.

In one concerted action, the intelligence services, along with the Western news agencies, magnify the actions of these derelicts in order to present to the world a scene of instability and an absence of lawful power. The goal is to destabilize the government during a given period in order to discredit its election and its officials. This is the case that has occurred in many former socialist countries.

This is what has happened in Albania following the elections of this past Sunday [31 March], which were recognized as free and democratic. In these elections the Albanian Workers Party [AWP], which has a communist tendency, obtained 162 of 231 parliamentary seats which were decided in the first round of voting, followed by the Democratic Party [DP], which can be profiled as a center-right party, with 65 seats. Upon the announcement of the election results, however, the opposition forces provoked disturbances in the northern city of Eskodra, where DP members occupied and then torched the headquarters of the ruling AWP. These events have left a total of three dead and 23 wounded, and of those 11 were civilians and 12 policemen.

In a declaration, the AWP Central Committee pointed out that the electoral triumph proves the energy and vitality of this party, which will work to gain and increase the confidence of the people in the struggle for the realization of its programs. The declaration outlines

plans for a transition toward what is announced as a democratic and parliamentary regime with a market economy, and proposes the creation of a national unity government. The invitation of the AWP to the DP to govern in a coalition was rejected by the latter, which called a general strike for today [4 April] in protest of the events in Skodra. As you can see, this is the start of the cycle of instability.

The Albanian nation has started down a long and difficult road and its efforts are now in the sights of the secret services of imperialism.

Castro Inaugurates Cold Storage Plant in Alquizar

FL0404132091 Havana Radio and Television Networks in Spanish 0130 GMT 2 Apr 91

[Speech by Cuban President Fidel Castro during the opening ceremony of a cold storage plant in Alquizar, Havana Province; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Crowd chants: "Fidel! Fidel!" and indistinct slogans] Dear comrades of the Blas Roca Contingent, comrades of Alquizar, guests:

As it was said here, today the Union of Young Communists [UJC] and the Cuban Pioneers decided to honor the 66 construction contingents that work in the entire country. Undoubtedly, this is a beautiful and just initiative to recognize those who have turned into leaders of a new style of work. In addition, we believe, we believe [repeats] that the selected place is the most adequate one inasmuch as this cold storage plant being inaugurated today is truly an example of the new times, an example of rectification, and an example of what contingents can do.

The cold storage plant's equipment had been in the country for years. A similar cold storage plant, which has also been completed this year, had been under construction for some 10 years. We asked the Blas Roca Contingent to organize a brigade to build this cold storage plant as quickly as possible. We remind you that excavating was being done in April. When I toured this area in May 1989, the patching plan was already being done, the parts collected from various places in the country or the province were being installed here less than 24 months ago.

This is a large and complex project. I would say it is a grand project. It was built by a new brigade, but by one that was determined to work with a contingent spirit. It was mostly composed of new construction workers. It was directed by a new engineer. At that time it was not Comrade Rivero but Comrade Juncos. We should say that he is responsible for an important part of the style of work and spirit instilled in Brigade 16. They worked intensely and intelligently and with a good construction strategy from the beginning. They overcame the numerous difficulties a project such as this one requires, from the accumulation of the needed material—many times they have to be found one by one—to each one of the thousands of prefabricated parts this cold storage plant requires.

The prestige obtained by this brigade advanced so much and became so great that one day we were forced to get hold of a top-rate cadre to boost the biological products plant in Bejucal. The chief of this brigade was chosen at the time to send him to that project which was also running behind schedule. Everything needed to be changed. There was chaos there and it had to be turned into a true construction force. We can say that with the help of the chief of Brigade 16 and a selected group of members of the contingent, everything changed in Bejucal in a few days. Order began to be established where chaos and complete disorganization was present. I remember that I talked to Comrade [Candido] Palmero [chief of the Blas Roca Calderio Contingent] at around 2000, after going on a tour to that project, and the first pieces of equipment and trucks to give support to Bejucal were there at 0600. Everything changed since then by using practically the same number of men that worked there. The contingent's norms and principles were applied there. The disorganization, the inflated roasters, and the surplus of forces were put to an end there. A great organization, great progress was achieved and was observed in a short period of time. The productivity of those workers practically increased four times. The project progressed at an extremely fast pace.

Of course, that was possible because a young man remained here as head of an already organized and experienced brigade. This young man had all the qualifications to head it. As it was said today, I believe he is only 26 years old. One of the traits of this Brigade 16 is its youth. We do believe that the construction of this cold storage plant in 23 months constitutes a feat of labor. [applause]

This was the first one the brigade built. The brigade members had no prior experience on this. This is why it has been proposed, and we are all in agreement, that this cold storage plant be named Labor Feat. [applause]

Comrade Palmero explained the information about the productivity per man. I believe it was around 2,000 [unit not specified]; 1,460 a month, as an average. There were times when you surpassed that figure and reached 2,000. He explained the cost indexes of the cold storage plant, of refrigeration per cubic meters—48,000 or 46,000—was 260 pesos, which is very low.

He explained to me how much material they had saved during the construction of the project and talked about the quality of the project. The most important thing is that the project was completed on time. It was not easy. Many problems had to be solved, the problems with styrofoam, among them. This delayed the project. It finally arrived and the raw material was processed and turned into styrofoam so that this material could be used in each one of the 24 refrigeration chambers.

The cold storage plant has been completed. It is being inaugurated on 1 April. Potatoes have been brought in for two or three days. The cold storage plant has been completed two weeks before the potato harvest ends. If it had been delayed for one month, we would have not been able to use this cold storage plant to store potatoes.

You cannot imagine the efforts that have been made with potatoes in the last few days. Potatoes were ready before the usual time, potatoes that usually take 90 days in their productive cycle. In this case, potatoes began to defoliate in 70 days. This began to happen 20 days early. Potatoes that usually take 120 days began to defoliate in 100 days. We should say that potatoes were planted at the right time. There were absolutely no delays in the planting of potatoes. The last potato was planted on 22 December. Potatoes used to be planted up to the middle of January and the end of January. The best time to plant potatoes in our climate is November and December.

This year has been characterized by being very warm. The month of January was especially warm. A warm January is very unfavorable for certain crops, for potatoes, tomatoes, onions, and garlic. Warm weather generally is not good for vegetables. Added to this warm weather was the high humidity index. It multiplies pests and affects the physiological behavior of plants.

This year you have also witnessed the southern winds which began to blow in this area early on, especially the March winds which reached 110 km per hour. Unfortunately, those factors are unfavorable for agriculture. They accelerated the development process of potatoes and even affected their yield. Potatoes that grow in 70 days are not the same as potatoes that grow under normal conditions in 90 days. In addition, all these factors harm the crops.

All this created the need to harvest potatoes in a relatively short period of time. Potatoes planted between 15 and 20 December, which are the last ones planted, have a longer cycle. Potatoes could be picked up on 20 or 25 April. This would be a longer period of time. In spite of all these adverse factors of nature, hard work was done in the potato fields, in the tending of potato fields, in the weeding and harvesting of the potato fields. Had it not been for the effort made, for the presence of over 10,000 workers from Havana Province, for the mobilization of thousands of workers from the capital, and the presence of thousands of workers mobilized in the province, the production of potatoes for this year would have been reduced by half of what we are really going to obtain, although what we are going to obtain is below the level of what had been planned for the potato harvest.

What would have we done without the two cold storage plants that were completed this year? I am referring to the one in Berroa, which was under construction for about 10 years but was finally completed this year, and the one in Alquizar which was built in less than two years.

Over 400,000 quintals of potatoes were sent to Havana in the month of March. The city was saturated with potatoes. The vegetable stands and the grocery stores did not want more potatoes. Nevertheless, there was no place to store potatoes. There was no place. There was a certain number of cold storage plants with a capacity of 700,000 quintals. This was what was available in the province. The new one in Berroa began to fill up. It also began to receive potatoes. The maximum amount of potatoes that could be stored in cold storage plants was 50,000 quintals. They have to be transported and placed in the chambers. The maximum amount that could be stored in a day was 50,000 quintals, with trucks and cold storage houses working at full capacity. At a given time, we had 80,000 quintals; 50,000 were stored in the cold storage plants and 30,000 had to be distributed. Havana could not take more potatoes. As I said, most of the installations were refusing to accept more. They did not have a place to store potatoes.

It was necessary to improvise storage places at the agricultural distribution centers in certain unrefrigerated warehouses because potatoes can be stored in the shade for several weeks. We decided to store potatoes there while they are distributed, while the Alquizar cold storage plant was inaugurated. This situation was a headache, to prevent potatoes from spoiling and to preserve them for several months. We do not do a thing if each person takes home a bag of potatoes in March and April, and later in June, July, August, and September there are no potatoes. This is why this project we are inaugurating is important. This project allows us to store over 250,000 quintals of potatoes. This could possibly be the consumption of one month and a half in September, or October, or August.

The one in Berroa allows us to do the same thing. We have the cold storage capacity of some 1.2 million quintals of potatoes. Therefore we will be able to preserve the entire crop and store over 1 million quintals for those months in which tomatoes, cabbage, lettuce, and many of those seasonal vegetables cannot be harvested.

Progress is being made at the Guines cold storage plant. We will have another cold storage plant next year, in 1992. I believe it is being built in Guines. We will have yet another one in 1993. It will be the same as this one and the one in Guines. Therefore, the country will have increased its cold storage capacity from 700,000 to over 1.7 million quintals in this province in three years. In only three years we will have increased the cold storage capacity by over 1 million quintals. The one that has been under construction for a long time has a capacity of 150,000 quintals and the three that the Blas Roca Contingent is building will have a capacity of 750,000—obviously, this one it just completed, the one it is building in Guines, Havana five, and the one that will be built in the Batabano area, Havana six.

The contingent is beginning to excavate at that cold storage house and this same Brigade 16 is the one that is

going to build the sixth cold storage plant in Havana Province. So, it it completing this one and will begin the other one.

We will have enough cold storage capacity to store the potatoes, to store peppers—which can be stored for a few weeks—and to store carrots. Many of these crops are ready during this time of the year and cannot be harvested well in the spring and summer. Many of these products can be stored in cold storage plants for months. Therefore, we need cold storage plants because of our weather. We also need them to store other products such as meat. Some of the chambers are freezers. We also store powdered milk and other types of foodstuffs.

The construction of these cold storage plants is closely linked to the food program. The one in Guines cannot be ready in April. It was completed almost at the last moment.... [changes thought] The one in Guines needs to be completed in February. Everything possible needs to be done to complete it in February, to test the cold chambers, to test the equipment, to see if they get cold.

They have been turning on the equipment so that it gets cool and they can store potatoes at the same time. They have been getting the chambers cold and storing potatoes. It would have been very good to have at least a month and a half to conduct tests. Hopefully, we will be storing potatoes in the Guines cold storage plant next March and also storing potatoes and other goods in the Alquizar cold storage plant. Next year we will have a better situation. This cold storage plant and the one in Guines will be completed; the four agricultural distribution centers in the capital with cold chambers will also be completed. There will be four. They are now providing services. They are storing potatoes, distributing things there, but the cold chambers have not been completed. This will provide a much more convenient situation for distribution. The 161 produce stands will be built. Construction has already begun. They will be completed. The four agricultural distribution centers will be completely finished. In addition, we will have this cold storage plant and the one in Guines. This is why I say it has to be ready in March.

These cold storage plants require not just a few things. As I said, the equipment for this one had not been installed for years. They have Bulgarian compressors. You know that economic relations have become difficult because of the changes that have taken place in that country. Relations with Bulgaria have become difficult. Two Bulgarian technicians have worked with us. All of the brigade workers have an excellent opinion of the seriousness and the spirit of contingent with which the two Bulgarian technicians who were here giving advise about the construction of the cold storage plant have worked. [applause]

The one in Guines will have Chinese refrigerators, not refrigerators [corrects himself] but compressors. We understand that they are of very good quality. We have some domestic ones. They have been tested. The cold storage plant is going to be built with that group of compressors. A cold storage plant requires many things. It requires a large number of pipes and a large number of equipment. Some of that equipment is built here by our mechanical industry. What we need is the raw material, the steel to build them. Part of the cold storage plant's equipment is built in Cuba.

A cold storage plant requires a large amount of pipes. We need to buy them. The Guines cold storage plant requires $1 million in construction material and pipes. We need to bring them to the country in time so that the project does not fall behind schedule. The ones in charge of that task need to follow very closely everything related to the shipping and arrival of those materials so that the project is not delayed a single day. A cold storage plant of this type requires around 200 tons of raw material to produce styrofoam. That raw material needs to be imported. Styrofoam is produced in the country with that raw material. Some 200 tons are needed. A ton of raw material costs around $2,000. We have to add $400,000 more for styrofoam. We have to study that very carefully and figure out where and when it is going to be purchased and when it will arrive in the country so that the styrofoam does not delay work on the Guines cold storage plant.

One of these cold storage plants, with 24 chambers, needs over 6,000 storage containers [autosoportantes]. I was asking the specialists about the matter and they said that a ton of steel is required for every 12 storage containers. So each of these cold storage plants requires some 600 tons of steel. The steel needs to be found. Since practically nothing comes from the socialist camp, today we will have to find 600 tons of steel for the storage containers. What are storage containers for? To be able to stack the goods. If not, one-third of the capacity of the cold storage plant is lost.

I said 250,000 quintals, but it is really over 300,000. I gave you round figures. As Palmero said, there is capacity for some 330,00 or 318,000 quintals. We could speak of 300,000 quintals—that is, if they have the storage containers, if they have the wooden shelves [pales]. In addition to the storage containers, of which there are around 6,000 or a little more, we need 10,000 shelves. The shelves are sort of wooden boards where the storage containers are placed. Potatoes are placed inside the storage containers. If you want to stack them to the ceiling, you need a front loader to load the shelves with the storage containers and the potatoes and place them one on top of another. I believe they have four stacks, three stacks [corrects himself]. You can see how space is used well.

Therefore, wood is needed. Some 1,700 cubic meters of wood are needed. We will have to see how we can get and how we can save wood because it has been a while since wood arrived here from socialist countries. It has been a while since many things arrived and we have to improvise, save, and maximize. Some 1,700 cubic meters of wood are needed. We will see how we can find it. Our

domestic production is slowly increasing although it is not enough. Half a million cubic meters of wood use to come from the USSR each year. This year we do not know how many cubic meters of wood will come from the USSR. Things do not look good in that sense. This gives you an idea of the growing difficulties we have to face to do things. We used to have a lot and some even wasted it. Now we get nothing. It is a good thing that our workers and our youths (?are aware of this).

We used to receive a certain amount of steel for the storage containers and whatever. Today we do not know how much will arrive. These are realities that I should tell you about. In spite of that we will persist. Many of those investments are basic for the food program. This is why we have to select the objectives very carefully. This is why during these years we are in the special period each centavo we invest and each cubic meter of raw material has to be dedicated to the most important things. Remember this because some still imagine that they are living in the best of the worlds. If things are done now during the special period—and plenty of things are done—it is because of the enormous effort being done to maximize, to do things efficiently, and to save.

Let us not forget that in the middle of all these difficulties we have repaired the sugar mills and we are conducting the sugarcane harvest, in spite of all those difficulties. Many more things can be done in spite of the difficulties. A cold storage plant such as this one needs front loaders. If goods were stacked manually, perhaps 60 percent of the cold storage plant would be used. This would be without the storage containers, the shelves, and the front loader. I asked someone from cold storage management about the front loader and he said they cost $20,000 some two years ago. Now they may cost $25,000 or $30,000 because the ones who produce these pieces of steel sell them more and at higher prices. What costs $20,000 today will cost $25,000 or $30,000 or $35,000 or $40,000 next year, and there is no end to price increases.

Whatever they buy, they buy at a low price, but what these developed capitalist countries sell, they sell at a higher price every time. One thing was made evident. There are five front loaders. I asked how many are needed in a cold storage plant such as this one. I was told that it depends, because if it has two batteries each front loader does the work of two. I asked how much a battery costs and was told some $3,000. Suppose it is a little more. If you have, if you have [repeats] a front loader with one battery you need the front loader twice as much. If you have a front loader with two batteries, with $3,000 more, you have another front loader. When the battery goes dead the front loader does not work. If you have two batteries, you replace the battery and the loader works twice as much. Instead of having 10 front loaders which would cost $200,000, you can have five front loaders working in the cold storage plant by making an additional investment of $3,000 per front loader. Note that I am giving you the information I was given.

If you go to the market now it may turn out that the front loader costs $25,000 and the other thing costs $4,500. I want to say that this information is very interesting. I demand that the comrades explain things and explain them clearly. I do not like for them to use a little notebook.

How many storage containers are needed? How many kilograms of steel are needed per storage container? This information is needed in order to make calculations. How many shelves and how much wood per shelf are needed? How many front loaders are needed and how much does each one of them cost? What is the most rational way of doing things? You learn something new every day. If you want to learn about cold storage plants you have to know what a cold storage plant is.

For the one in Guines, we already know that we will have to spend $1 million in pipes. We already know that we have to spend $200,000 in raw materials. This can also go up or down. We need to spend on styrofoam. We already know that we need 1,700 cubic meters of wood. We already know that we need a little over 600 tons of steel. We already know that we need to import a certain number of front loaders. So, we need styrofoam, wood, steel, front loaders, and twice as many batteries in order to exploit the front loaders well. Each one of those cold storage plants can be exploited by 100 percent. Three like these under those conditions would give us a capacity of almost 1 million quintals, three like this one. There are the three new ones the Blas Roca is building. With those, plus the one in Berroa, we would have a capacity of almost 1.2 million quintals.

This is how those plants need to be exploited. Of course, we have the old cold storage plants. We have to see that some always have some sort of problem, something that needs to be repaired. This year there was a mud slide in the eastern part of the country and the capacity of a cold storage plant was lost. We need to repair it by next year. We have to see how they are doing with storage containers, front loaders, shelves, etc.

Cold storage is essential and these new plants need to be completed. There are not a few problems that need to be solved to guarantee food for the people. It is not the case that we are going to eat all the potatoes in three months and that we do not have potatoes for later. The city appeared to be a bottomless barrel. When it received over 400,000 quintals there was no more room for potatoes. There must be a lot of people with a good amount of stored potatoes. A little less is going to be distributed in April.

It is more important to have the recipe from June on. Why? Because spring planting is coming up. There is so much work during these days that everything such as potatoes, garlic, onions, carrots, and tomatoes is being harvested. Those seasons are coming to an end. Now we have to work hard and start planting sweet potatoes, yucca—whatever can be planted during this time—calabash. Calabash is not a high-yield crop. A good

calabash plot produces 1,600 quintals. [Words indistinct] produces more, as well as sweet potatoes and yucca. All that yields more. Eggplants yield more. We now have to be very selective. We need to find another vegetable. We should not plant a type of vegetable that does not yield a lot. The preparation of the land is wasted. An enormous amount of work is done. A small amount of product is harvested and it is of poor quality.

The planting of vegetables is being concentrated on green beans, okra, eggplants, cucumbers, certain amounts of peppers, herbs for flavoring, and large amounts of yucca and sweet potatoes. Of course, we will plant plantains, but we will not harvest plantains until a year after they are planted has gone by. Plantains are not like calabash. You can pick calabash 70 days after you plant them. You have to wait a year to harvest plantains. There are thousands of workers planting plantains now. We are going to have large amounts of plantains in the future. Of course, we already have a greater amount of plantains this year because we are planting them and irrigating the fields with aerial or land microjet or with fregat machines.

We have to wait for that plantain. Plantains will become a great food source for the city and province. Many caballerias of plantain are being planted with very advanced technology. Plantains do not suffer from the heat of spring and summer like tomatoes or potatoes and other crops do. It increases its production in those months. It is a noble crop. We have to protect them from the weeds and take care of them; we have to protect plantain fields from pests. In reality, most of these crops need to be carefully protected from pests. We should say that pests are a strong and bad enemy of farming.

We were able to control the white fly this year in the tomato and bean fields and other crops and also in the cabbage patchs. Last year the white fly did a lot of damage, but biological controls were used this year. When there is not one plague there is another. Very specific and good quality pesticides are needed. They are expensive, very expensive. Sometimes, the fungi, bacteria, and viruses adapt to pesticides and new ones are needed. They are not only expensive but sometimes they are difficult to find. We are working hard to see if we can develop our own pesticides. Sometimes we find out that there is a sophisticated pesticide for a specific crop but Cuba does not have the chance to get it even if it has the money because it uses Yankee technology or something like that. Then we cannot buy it.

We have to always be after the most modern pesticides because those plantations are attacked by many diseases and we need to protect them. Good preparation of the soil and good seeds are not the only things needed. There are other problems such as irrigation, hot weather, and pests. The last few years have been generally characterized by excessive heat.

According to international information, in the last 150 years, six of the seven hottest years have been in the eighties, six. In the last 150 years, 1990 was the hottest year. This year has been hot. There have been years when we have had over 30 cold fronts and this year we have had about eight or nine cold fronts. A decisive month such as January was a hot one, pretty hot. In our opinion, this responds to the so-called greenhouse effect. The changes that are taking place in nature are a result of the excessive amounts of old fuels and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere which produce a heating effect. At international congresses, scientists have expressed a growing concern over this situation which in the long- or mid-term could have worse consequences such as the reduction of the ice mass of glaciers and the polar caps, the possibility of the increased level of the seas, an increasing frequency of hurricanes alternating with droughts, and above all, an increase in the average temperature.

This is extremely important for agriculture. Two or three degrees have a considerable effect. Two, two [repeats] factors are present in our climate: heat and humidity. Our island has a very high humidity index. This could be good for some of the crops, perhaps for the sugarcane, but especially for plantains and some of these crops. It would be bad for other crops such as tomatoes, onions, and garlic. The combination of heat and humidity is bad.

All this forces us to conduct very important scientific work. For example, we are producing new varieties of tomatoes. There is a research center that works to find new varieties of tomatoes. It is true that new varieties can be imported from other countries. We do this. But rarely does a variety from another country give results in another. They are good varieties that grow in a certain level of humidity or dry air, a certain heat level, and a number of factors. Sometimes hundreds of varieties are tested and one or two give some results.

There are many differences between one country and another and all these plants are very sensitive to those changes. This is why scientific research in our own country is important. We have one of those tomatoes, the HC-6880. Some have been distributed. We are increasing the production. It has a strong and hard skin. It ripens. It lasts eight, 10, or 15 days after it ripens. It is very resilient. It does not have a bad level of productivity. This one is mixed with the Rome variety. The Rome was not created domestically. It came from other countries but a certain amount was planted in Pinar del Rio. We have noticed that the available varieties of tomatoes are sensitive to the heat and humidity. The province has had problems with tomatoes for two years in a row. A reserve crop was planted in Pinar del Rio. Over 300 caballerias of tomatoes were planted as reserves, mainly tomatoes for puree, although they can also be eaten in salads. That variety of tomato resisted pests, heat, southern winds, and dust. The ones who have mobilized to that city.... [changes thought] Someone told me two days ago that the Havana residents who were there in the southern part of Havana Province looked like Bedouins because they were covered with I do not know what type of fabric. It was almost dark because of

the southern winds and the dust. The comrades were picking every single tomato under those conditions. They were also affected by them, by the heat and pests. They expected greater yields. In spite of this, those some 300 caballerias that were planted as reserves helped to cover the Havana Province deficits.

Next year we plan to plant around 50 caballerias of tomatoes for salad. That type of tomato produces three times as much per hectar and it may resist the heat and pests better. It requires a lot of work because it needs between 30 to 40 workers per caballeria. We are going to have a strong plan. We are going to look for new things. We are going to expand the land area and are making as much technical and scientific effort possible to overcome these frequent and growing difficulties brought by the heat and humidity.

We have tomato-related programs for next year. We have 17 different varieties of potatoes. We have to go from enterprise to enterprise, from peasant to peasant, from cooperative to cooperative, to see the result of each one of those 17 varieties to attempt to select those that show more resistance to this heat and humidity. The results were not the same in all municipalities. Here in Alquizar the results were not among the best. Potato yields in state enterprises were around 3,700 quintals per caballeria. The yield of individual peasants, which usually is good, who harvest potatoes was about 3,100 or 3,200—I do not remember exactly but it was in that vicinity. We have asked cooperatives that have a lot of experience and peasants. Many times they have had lower yields than the miscellaneous crops enterprises. However, the miscellaneous crops enterprises have also been below the estimates. This has been the case in some municipalities more than others. Now we have to see them one by one and see which variety they planted, how they prepared the soil, and other details.

I know that some municipalities such as Melena del Sur had some difficulties with the DDA. The DDA are Soviet irrigation machines which have been used for many years. They use a lot of fuel and are not very efficient. They also use a lot of water. They have been without spare parts for a long time. This could have had an effect on the yield in Melena del Sur. The central pivot machine has been used in other places. Some of them are Soviet-made. Some of them. Others are being built in Cuba. Now we have to study all the details one by one. In general, the weather was bad for potato harvests and affected the production of individual peasants, of cooperatives, and even of the state crops.

Nevertheless, due to the effort made to complete the cold storage plants, we will be able to have over 1 million quintals of reserve potatoes to deal with during those months in which there is a drop in production. There is a very important thing in the spring programs, very important. We need to plant over 300 caballerias of sweet potatoes, over 300 caballerias of potatoes, in addition to all the other crops I mentioned.

In April, we need to plant over 500, around 600 caballerias of potatoes [corrects himself] not potatoes, yucca, sweet potatoes, calabash, corn, all of those crops, and the same amount in May.

When the June rains come we need to have most of the caballerias already planted because things get complicated with the rains because of the weeds and all those things. We do not know how much rain we are going to get in June.

A lot of work lies ahead for the province. The other crops will have to be planted immediately after the potatoes and tomatoes. We are going to follow this closely. Next Thursday we are going to hold a meeting with the directors of the miscellaneous crops enterprises to make some analyses and especially to examine the spring planting matter. This is very important because until all the new microject irrigation techniques are extended to all plantain plantations, until we have the 600 caballerias, which is the program the capital has, 500 of them with the microject irrigation system, we cannot lose a single minute to plant during these dry months that are left. We have to mobilize all the forces the capital sends. We need to use the rural schools in an efficient and optimal way before they reach their vacation and exam period. We have to mobilize the rural schools. We have to mobilize the residents of the towns so that the spring planting program activities do not fall behind schedule or are left unattended.

This needs to be done in the months of July, August, September, and October, when we can at least have plenty of those products that are included in the spring plan. We need to give special attention to plantain plantations, especially the plantain grown with the microject system, so that it becomes an important reinforcement to the supplies for the city during the second half of the year.

Unfortunately, we still have to continue bringing tubers from other provinces. We will have to bring them from Ciego de Avila and other provinces because Havana is still not self-sufficient. Self-sufficiency may have been partially reached in the capital and the province beginning in the second half of 1992 and perhaps completely by the first half of 1993. Up to now, no less than half of the tubers and vegetables consumed in the capital were brought from other provinces. With the exception of very special conditions such as a hurricane, we want Havana to not have to bring those products from other provinces. Each province should produce what it is going to consume.

We have 38,000 hectars for these crops. This equals almost 3,000 caballerias. We are now going to add 4,000 more hectars. There will be 154 square meters of tubers and vegetables for each Havana and Havana Province citizen. A large amount will be planted two times. So that you get an idea, a plantain grown with the aerial microject irrigation system has 4.4 square meters. That is, with 20 some square meters we would have five main

plants, and one main plant irrigated with aerial microject could produce up to 150 pounds of plantain a year. Well tended, well taken care of, this land would allow self-sufficiency and even have a surplus. This is a big task.

We need to take all these factors I told you about into consideration. We need to have good and adequate seeds that are resistant to pests, heat, and diseases. We need to have the best conditions of attention, irrigation, everything.

We expect to be very close to being self-sufficient by the second half of next year. All those caballerias of plantains that will be planted this year will be in full production next year. There is a large amount of plantains irrigated with the microject system. A large portion of land has been transferred from cane. Nevertheless, sugarcane is going to increase its production because we are going to increase the engineer work in the cane fields. We are going to increase the irrigated areas and we are going to even conduct experiments with aerial microjet systems in sugar fields to see what it yields.

Some 10 hectars are already being planted with different varieties and at different distances. We need to apply all the scientific advances and everything that comes out new. This trend began with plantains but we want to test it with other crops. We will not stop with the idea of turning these 42,000 hectars into a vegetable garden.

I am not counting the sugarcane fields which are going to produce more. There are 8,000 caballerias of cane. There are over 100,000 hectares of cane in the province. The province, Havana Province alone produces enough sugar for the entire island. Havana Province produces almost 1 million liters of milk a year. Tubers and vegetables are very important for the population's nutrition and health. This is where there was a greater shortage of labor force, where there were more problems and more difficulties. The 42,000 hectars are irrigated. These are the characteristics of the food program we are developing in the province and, of course, in the entire country.

I believe that this explanation that I have given you will help you to understand the importance a project such as this one has and it will help you to understand the importance of working with a contingent spirit. No country will go forward by losing time and loafing around. It can only go forward by working as contingents work, by working as the mobilized people work. A country advances and advances a lot, and advances much faster than capitalist countries because it has the opportunity to plan development. Development is not done at random and it is not subjected to the plans and madness of thousands of different people who do what they please with the country's wealth, the country's land, and the country's resources instead of having all the people united by a development program. People united like this and people with a socialist system can face the terrible blows our country has suffered from the disasters that have taken place in Eastern Europe and from the chaos created in the Soviet Union.

Look at what can be achieved in an organized way. Over 60 camps with room for 20,000 workers were built in a few weeks. Tens of thousands of people went from Havana to Pinar del Rio to pick tomatoes. You also know about the spirit with which the mobilized people who have gone to those camps work. The young people in those camps have also boosted the work spirit of the agricultural workers who sometimes worked only four or five hours. There is a new spirit. You can see how the people respond. But the cadres have to respond with this spirit. We should permanently be analyzing the work of the agriculture cadres, see how they work, and see if the result in one place was better because better work was done or worse in another place because not so good work was done.

Of course, conditions are not the same everywhere. The soil is not the same. The weather is not always the same. Sometimes there is a heavy rainfall in one spot and it does not rain somewhere else. The equipment is not the same. Not everyone has the same irrigation equipment. We have to demand more and more from the cadres who are there in agriculture and the party.

After the winter season ends we need to analyze the municipalities and enterprises one by one at the same time that we carry out the winter planting programs. The struggle being carried out in the eastern part of the country is difficult, it is hard. It has to be this way because we do not only have to provide supplies to hundreds of thousands of people in the province but to over 2 million mouths in the capital. Every day they wait for the plantain, sweet potatoes, yucca, vegetables, or carrots, or everything together. We need to guarantee these supplies under difficult climatic conditions for many of those crops, under changing weather conditions. This is a reality.

Our people trust themselves. They trust their technicians, their scientists, and their workers. In the same way that you made the miracle happen by building this extraordinary project in less than two years, our workers, our technicians, and our scientists will know how to face and how to overcome the difficulties that may come up.

I warmly congratulate the workers of Brigade 16 and all the brigades of the Blas Roca Contingent, the construction and agricultural brigades who are beginning a new experience. We closely join in the feelings of the UJC and Pioneers, we congratulate the workers of the 66 contingents throughout the island who are an example of the spirit of revolutionary work. They are an example of what a country should do if it wants to advance. They are an inspiration to all workers and are a hope for the fatherland. Socialism or death! Fatherland or death! We will win! [crowd joins in the slogan] [applause]

Haiti

Mrs. Trouillot Incarcerated as Coup Accomplice

FL0404205591 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Live report by correspondent Rotchil]

[Excerpts] [Rotchil] We are at the Civil Court of Port-au-Prince, where the former president of the Republic, Mrs. Ertha Pascal-Trouillot, arrived a few minutes ago in an official police car. She was accompanied by several uniformed policemen as well as plainclothesmen. She went straight to the office of Public Prosecutor Antony Alouidor. The gates at his office are now locked and we are all waiting for Mrs. Trouillot's departure. We still do not know if a summons to appear or an arrest warrant was issued. [passage omitted]

At 1215 the former president left the court in a police car after questioning by the public prosecutor, lawyer Alouidor. We remind you that Mrs. Trouillot was already questioned within the framework of the investigation regarding the attempted bid for power by Roger Lafontant on 7 January. She is banned from leaving the country. Upon leaving the court, Mrs. Trouillot stated: The Lord is great. His mercy endures forever. Then the former president was escorted by police to the National Penitentiary.

[Prosecutor Alouidor] At a certain stage in the proceedings and on the basis of the file, the authorities decided to take Mrs. Trouillot into police custody within the framework of the attempt to gain power on 6-7 January. A summons to appear was issued, which is the normal procedure. The charges against her were explained to her and the summons was changed to an arrest warrant. We are following the principles of the criminal code. She will be questioned and she is entitled to confront the witnesses against her if she wishes. [passage omitted]

[Rotchil] What are the charges against her?

[Alouidor] The charges are accomplice to the bid for power on 6-7 January. Mrs. Trouillot is therefore in police custody at the National Petinentiary. We remind listeners that Mrs. Trouillot has already been questioned concerning the bid for power by Roger Lafontant. She was also questioned by an Army investigation commission which was established just after the bid for power.

Hydro-Quebec Turbines Arrive From Miami

FL0404233591 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] Turbines from Miami arrived in Port-au-Prince yesterday, within the framework of the contract signed on 6 March between the Haitian Government and Hydro-Quebec International, in an effort to find a solution to the serious energy crisis the country has been facing.

A second shipment is expected by mid-April. Mr. Rosemond Pradel, general director of EDH [Electricity Company of Haiti], specified at the beginning of the week that both deliveries were of equal importance and one could not be used without the other. If there is no major problem with this new equipment, Port-au-Prince should improve its electricity supply by the end of April.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Prime Minister Announces 'Minor' Cabinet Changes

FL0404184391 Bridgetown CANA in English 1747 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Kingstown, St Vincent, April 4, CANA—Prime Minister James Mitchell has announced some minor changes to his cabinet affecting the portfolios of trade, education, culture and foreign affairs.

Attorney-General and Justice Minister Parnel Campbell, recovering from a minor heart attack, was relieved of responsbility for culture which has been reassigned to the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Women's Affairs headed by John Horne.

Minister of state in the Ministry of Trade and Tourism, Johnathan Peters, was transferred to the prime minister's office to assist with foreign affairs, while Stuart Nanton who was parliamentary secretary in the prime minister's office was transferred to the Ministry of Trade.

Mitcheli said his decision to relieve Campbell of culture was taken on the advice of the minister's doctors who asked that his workload be reduced. Campbell is expected to resume duties during this month.

Trinidad and Tobago

Opposition Leader Calls For General Elections

FL0404164091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1616 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Port of Spain, Trinidad, April 4, CANA—Trinidad and Tobago's minority opposition leader Patrick Manning, describing the government as a "bunch of mediocre misfits" wants general elections to be called in light of failed economic policies.

"If after four years of tinkering and tampering with the economy, all they have achieved is another year of economic decline, they do not deserve the privilege of governing this country," the leader of the People's National Movement (PNM) said in a press statement. The five year term of the government of Prime Minister Arthur Robinson ends in December.

"...We in the PNM are calling on the government once more to do the decent thing and to call a general election without any further delay," said Manning whose party lost the 1986 general election after 30 years in office to

the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR). The PNM, he stated, is ready to govern the twin-island state again.

Manning also called for the government to withdraw its budget document titled "Review of the Economy, 1990" from public circulation since it falsely claimed that there was a "turnaround" in the economy. In his 1991 budget presentation in December, Finance Minister Selby Wilson estimated a 0.7 per cent growth in the economy for 1990, after seven years of decline. The central bank reported a fourth quarter decline in the economy of 0.4 per cent in 1990 compared to a 0.8 per cent fall in the fourth quarter of 1989.

Said Manning: "(It) has proven the NAR government to be at best a bunch of mediocre misfits who are incapable of responsible government.... intent on trying to fool the people of this country into believing that their measures are working, while people starve and poverty stalks the land."

Robinson last week said he expects "renewed growth" in the economy this year since signs all around were encouraging. He said there had been a progressive slowing down in the rate of decline experienced over the past eight years.

Turks and Caicos

Opposition PNP Wins Parliamentary Majority

FL0404223291 Bridgetown CANA in English 2119 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Grand Turk, April 4, CANA—The People's Democratic Movement Government, led by Chief Minister Oswald Skippings, was swept from power in this British West Caribbean territory in a general election on Wednesday.

The Progressive National Party (PNP) scored a convincing eight [to] five win after holding only two seats in the previous Legislative Council. They now dominate three of five districts in the string of islands at the southeast of the Bahama chain. Just over 4,000 people were registered to vote.

PNP leader, Washington Missic, said Thursday the results were more or less what his party expected. He said he was not disillusioned that there was tremendous hard work ahead. "With an opposition as strong as it is, it can only make us work harder," he remarked.

The Turks and Caicos economy is dependent on fishing and increasingly, tourism and offshore business.

Meetings were being held Thursday to decide the allocation of portfolios. Skippings was unavailable for comment but there were reports that his party was concerned about the counting in North and Middle Caicos and there was talk of the possibility of a recount. Elections were last held here in 1988.

Official on Free Trade Agreement, Petroleum Sales

PA0204153191 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2300 GMT 1 Apr 91

[Text] Mexico City, 1 Apr (NOTIMEX)—Jaime Serra Puche, secretary of commerce and industrial development, said today that Mexico will sell its oil to the most advisable market, price-wise, with or without a free trade agreement (ALC). In pointing out that Mexico will seek the best conditions to sell its oil regardless of the ALC, Serra Puche dismissed claims that the ALC could lead Mexico to sell its crude at a lower price to the United States and Canada.

After attending a meeting at the Foreign Relations Secretariat (SRE), the official said that "Mexico is seeking an ALC that would allow it to sell all its products without barriers or obstacles." The agreement, he added, would give it access to U.S. and Canadian markets, but would in no way become an instrument by which Mexico would compromise its sovereignty or its overall relationship with the world.

"Far from affecting our sovereignty and independence, the ALC would give Mexican exporters greater access to those markets and this would, in turn, create jobs and strengthen the national economy," Serra Puche said. The secretary of commerce and industrial development added that this agreement would not turn Mexico into a U.S. colony and reiterated that constitutional aspects and the issues of migration and labor force are not subjected to ALC negotiations.

In reaffirming that with or without the ALC Mexico will increase its exports, Serra Puche said that to the extent that the country is capable of selling and producing more, we will be able to create more jobs and Mexicans will not need to migrate as much to the other side of the border in search of jobs. That is, he insisted, "We want to export products, not Mexicans, and this is why the latter issue will not be among the main ones addressed in the treaty."

He said that Mexico manufactures good products and an example of this is the fact that Mexico is the number one seller of refrigerators and color televisions to the U.S. market.

So far we have achieved much progress in the area of exports and today we are exporting more than $17 billion in various petroleum products," Serra Puche added. [no opening quotation mark as received]

As for the Economic Growth and Stability Pact (PECE), the official said that it will continue to be an instrument that will allow the country to achieve stability and create more jobs to ensure that Mexicans enjoy a better life.

* Munoz Ledo Meeting With Salinas Discussed

* Munoz Ledo Cites Cardenas

91CA0083A Mexico City PROCESO in Spanish No 746, 18 Feb 91 pp 6-10

[Report by Francisco Ortiz Pinchetti]

[Text] Once again the center of controversy, Porfirio Munoz Ledo is pleased about his meeting with President Carlos Salinas de Gortari. "The timing was right, and the decision was correct," he said.

Reluctant to discuss their conversation in detail, the senator and PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution] leader argued that such meetings, by their very nature, "if they are not secret, they are indeed discreet" and that it is not proper for just one party to tell of its substance. Nevertheless, he agreed to describe the tone of the meeting and how it was held, mentioned the main issues they addressed, and explained the reasons why he decided "to run the risks" that his visit to Los Pinos entailed.

"The meeting was held in an atmosphere of great clarity," he related. "With absolute respect in its tone and form, we expressed our ideas with the same substance as we express them in public. It was a conceptual dialogue, and most of it was devoted, as planned, without an agenda, to an analysis of the world situation and to the various international scenarios that could arise. And of course, the repercussions for Mexico."

Interviewed in the van in which he drove back to Guanajuato on Friday the 15th to continue his campaign as the PRD's candidate for governor of the state, Munoz Ledo reaffirmed that his meeting with Salinas de Gortari was strictly personal. After mentioning that he consulted with Cuauhtemoc Cardenas several times on the matter, he dispelled any doubts that the two were drifting apart. "We have had a historic relationship, which I regard as unshakable," he said. "We began together and we will finish together."

Mexico's former ambassador to the UN and former chairman of the Security Council recounted that the possibility of a meeting with the president at the official residence of Los Pinos on 11 February was brought up more than a month ago in early January.

"Was it agreed that it would be personal?"

"That is right. Obviously there were various contacts over these weeks. Such meetings are not held without a minimum of preparation. It was proposed that the main purpose would be to analyze the international situation."

He said that he knew from the press and from direct testimony that the chief executive had spoken with other well-known figures who are knowledgeable about international politics, such as ambassadors Jorge Castaneda and Francisco Cuevas Cancino, the latter Munoz Ledo's predecessor in the UN, as well as other well-known media figures and Mexican intellectuals.

"This background information was important to me in making a decision. As was the fact that some of our ideas, which we upheld very openly, very radically, in opposition to what the administration had initially maintained, had been taken into consideration publicly. Such was the case with the opportune rectification in the matter of Mexico's military involvement in the Persian Gulf conflict. The president also said that the opposition's views on the conflict were respectful and respectable. In other words, there was valid testimony that he was prepared to listen and that therefore a dialogue could make sense. I also considered that above all I am Mexican and that I have the deep-seated conviction that the country is going to be entering an extremely dangerous period."

"Did you bear in mind your status as a leader, as a prominent figure in the Party of the Democratic Revolution?"

"Of course. But being a member of the opposition does not detract from my status as a senator of the republic and, as such, a member of a branch of the Federal Government. Nor does it exempt me from my responsibilities, which as for any senator are responsibilities of State."

"All of these considerations," said the former national president of PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] and former secretary of education and labor, "I pondered for several weeks and of course I had all sorts of reservations about how such a meeting could be interpreted, about the reactions that it could prompt. But I decided to take the risk."

Prior Consultation

Wearing blue tweed jeans and a jeans jacket, the controversial 57-year old politician emphasized:

"I acted in good conscience. Whatever the ultimate outcome of the meeting is interpreted to be, I think that I acted correctly."

"Did you discuss the matter beforehand with the PRD leadership?"

"Owing to the very nature of the meeting, neither of the two parties could publicize it. Such meetings, without being secret, must be discreet, both in their preparation and in any later references to their substance. I did discuss the matter with several prominent members of the party, with whom I am particularly good friends and whose opinion, because of their good judgment, I wanted to hear so that I could form my own views. The people I spoke with also thought it over. None of them gave me an automatic reply. And my survey came up positive."

"Did you also consult with Cuauhtemoc Cardenas?"

"In the particular case of Cardenas I was especially careful, in view of his status as the national leader of our party and because he is a symbol to millions of Mexicans, a symbol that has to be preserved not only as a patrimony of the PRD but as a democratic patrimony of the country. I was particularly careful not to compromise him in any way.

"I must say, in all honesty, that Cardenas had reservations about the merit of this meeting, especially at the beginning. He expressed his opposition to it, also gauging the risks that it could entail. Yet we agreed that if it were held, I would be acting strictly on my own, and not without the warnings that he gave me about the negative consequences that it could have for me, the party, and our cause."

Leaning back in the rear seat of the vehicle, which was doing 140 km an hour on the Mexico-Queretaro highway, Munoz Ledo pauses and then goes on:

"I want to state for the record, because there has been some confusion, that although I talked about it several times with Cuauhtemoc Cardenas for at least a month and although I had an obligation to do so and to keep him abreast of developments, at no time did I receive explicit approval from him. And I think that this was as it should have been, so that he would be protected from any negative result.

"I decided to take all the risk. With a formula that I made clear in my conversations with him: If some good came of this decision for the country, for democracy in Mexico, it would be for the benefit of all; if on the other hand the consequences were negative, I alone would suffer them."

Seeking to make this point perfectly clear, he reaffirmed that it is "totally inaccurate" that Cardenas gave any sort of authorization to hold the meeting with the president. "But it would also be inaccurate to say that I did so disobediently," he added. "I did so in exercise of my freedom, which he acknowledges and respects."

"Is there any rift in your relationship with Cuauhtemoc?"

"Absolutely not. My relationship with him is based not only on great personal affection and political respect but also on the nature and importance of the decisions that we have made together and the ones that we have each made individually, even though we have had differences of opinion on certain issues. I regard it as a historic relationship. I can so describe it, without exaggeration."

He cited episodes in this history:

"Together we made the decision to begin the Democratic Current in PRI, with the help of other very close colleagues, such as Ifigenia Martinez and, of course, Rodolfo Gonzalez Guevara, who originally developed the idea. Together Cardenas and I made strategic decisions about the stance of the Current and we analyzed all of the possible variations and consequences of our actions. Together we made the decision to stand up firmly to the aggressive reaction of the system through Jorge de la Vega at the 13th PRI Assembly."

Munoz Ledo recalled that Cardenas decided to publish a "very courageous" letter three days after this aggression, a letter in which he said that the president of PRI had no moral authority to judge us. "He showed it to me. Only he had signed it. I approved of it and two days later I did likewise in a communique that is included in the book 'Compromisos' [Commitments] under the title 'Solidarity With Cuauhtemoc Cardenas.' That letter was my break with the regime, my break with the president of the republic, Miguel de la Madrid."

Together, he went on to say, Cardenas and he were expelled from PRI. Together they decided to nominate the former governor of Michoacan as a presidential candidate. Together they charted and carried out "the enormous and complex task" of establishing the National Democratic Front (FDN). Together they decided to create a new political party.

"And together we are going to make the big decisions, I hope, until we succeed in establishing democracy in Mexico and even afterwards."

The senator sums things up:

"I feel that our relationship is unshakable. We have often disagreed, on a wide variety of issues, but he has made the decisions. I have always respected and supported him."

The Risks and the Reasons

Munoz Ledo kept mulling over whether he ought to meet with Salinas de Gortari. What were the risks?

"First came the normal doubts about falling into a trap, especially when you are a political adversary," he said as we passed by San Juan del Rio. "I dismissed that doubt quickly, however, because of the earnestness of the proposal. I must say that the other side was altogether courteous. I have no complaints about the way in which it was held. He behaved very professionally, with great respect."

He said that there was also the risk of some indiscretion "above all because during the process of establishing closer ties several individuals were in one way or another aware of the possibility of a meeting. An indiscretion would have ruined honorable intentions. This was the main reason why we decided that the meeting would be made public after it was held. It was a decision that I made, that was left up to me. It could have been held privately, never clandestinely. The other side would have agreed to its being private, but neither of us would have agreed to its being clandestine."

The meeting between the president of the republic and Munoz Ledo "was conducted with total transparency." It was held in the president's office in Los Pinos, "a place that to be sure I know well. I spent hours, days, months working there for many years."

They also weighed the danger that the meeting would be misinterpreted by the public as a surrender, a sell-out, an abandonment of principles, "or as a maneuver for personal benefit, especially since I am a candidate." This did not happen: "Fortunately, to my pleasant surprise the country's serious press has demonstrated a high degree of maturity in this case."

He praised his own good judgment:

"The timing was right, and the decision was correct. We had to gamble that people would understand that these things are good for the country. And people did understand."

Another risk was the possible adverse reactions that the meeting might prompt in PRD. "There are opposing views in the party. Not concerning the overall line, which is one of consensus, in the sense that we are open to dialogue, but that the objective conditions have to exist for this. The differences are over the forms that such a dialogue ought to assume and its timing. The risk, in effect, was that it could prompt very different reactions that could harm party unity and ultimately play into our enemies' hands. I do not think that this happened."

"Why did you decide to meet with Salinas de Gortari even though the objective conditions that the PRD demands were not present?"

"Because I think that one way to create the objective conditions is to break the ice. My diplomatic experience had a great deal of influence in this decision. From the many conflicts in which I have been involved I have drawn the conclusion that it is useful for people just to sit down and talk. Even in cases of war. The very fact of sitting down, at the appropriate level, can help to create these objective conditions. This does not mean that the specific purpose of my visit was to create such conditions, but I am convinced that it could help create them."

Munoz Ledo feels that the PRD must not merely remain open to a dialogue with the government. "We also have to have an attitude very clearly in favor of dialogue and to keep in mind that what in diplomatic language is called 'building trust' has to be done through steps by both sides. Even if each is convinced that he is right and that the other is his adversary."

He hopes that the government will take steps to build such trust. "I will not say that I am certain that it is going to, nor do I want to seem like a dreamer. I think that if there is a willingness to dialogue and a true desire to strengthen unity among Mexicans in the risky situation in which we are living, then this unity can happen only if deceit, pretense, and fraud are eliminated, if we establish clear ground rules that will enable us as political opponents to consider ourselves not as enemies but as political adversaries on an equal footing."

He says that he does not retract anything that he has said at any point. "I continue to think that history cannot be erased and that the government's attitude has been radically contrary to the advancement of democracy in Mexico. But I am also sure that some official circles are convinced that we cannot continue to proceed with the same guidelines of conduct, because the dangers to the country's stability are enormous. I think that it is a

patriotic duty to create these ground rules, accepted by all, so that the country's political process can unfold without violence."

The Meeting

Salinas de Gortari and Munoz Ledo discussed this need, among other issues, at their meeting, which was also attended by Interior Secretary Fernando Gutierrez Barrios.

"Of course," the senator clarifies, "the meeting was not called so that we could discuss domestic political issues. So, events having to do with the international scene took up most of our time. There was not much time to deal with domestic issues. They were noted, though. Issues like the need for a reliable list of voters, fair, clean elections, the involvement of international observers. We also took note of the human rights issue, which is so important, and the information system. They were topics of conversation, not negotiation."

"To what extent is this meeting a step forward in creating conditions for a government-PRD dialogue?"

"It is too early to tell. If the backlash effects do not prevail, as I hope, and if the government takes some real steps that demonstrate its willingness to improve the democratic process, I think that a dialogue could be formalized in the near future."

"Before the federal elections in August?"

"Hopefully. Because it is no use locking the stable door after the horse is gone."

"After your meeting, do you think that President Salinas has the political will to promote a transition to democracy?"

"Only deeds can demonstrate that. He has indeed expressed that will, but deeds have yet to confirm it."

"What stand did the president take on your proposals about domestic politics?"

"As I told you, there was very little time, unfortunately, for such proposals. They were, of course, why our conversation lasted longer than planned. Without an agenda, I repeat, we were supposed to discuss other issues. Formally, he expressed a devotion to democracy. This makes me think that we ought to try a dialogue, to see whether these expressions of willingness are real.

"Now then, I agree with my fellow party members that trust must be built with deeds. This is my party's policy. I think that both things are true: we have to attempt a dialogue, and we have to help create the conditions for that dialogue."

"Was there talk of a possible dialogue during your meeting?"

"I had no mandate for this. It was, I repeat, a personal conversation."

"Had you had dealings with Carlos Salinas before?"

"Never. We had never spoken. Because we are from different generations and worked in different areas of government, we had never had the chance to talk. Moreover, because I was overseas during the years when he was on the way up politically. We recalled having greeted each other very briefly once at some event and having crossed paths at some funeral without saying hello, after the break. That is all."

"Does the president know Cuauhtemoc Cardenas?"

"Yes, because they held office at the same time. When Cardenas was governor of Michoacan, Salinas was secretary of planning and budget; so, logically, they had contact. Salinas even went with a presidential delegation to a Cardenas government report. And of course he was spoken of very highly."

"Was Cuauhtemoc mentioned during your meeting?"

"The few references that there were arose from treating some issue or another. And they were very respectful."

Munoz Ledo commented that as for international issues, the focus of their talk, he emphasized the implications and dangers for national sovereignty of the transition in hegemony going on in the world today. "Today we are living through perhaps the most sweeping of transitions in hegemony, from a bipolar to a multipolar world. This is a painful and very risky transition. A pathological time in international affairs, when military might is being used to influence economic factors."

"The United States is compensating for its loss of economic competitiveness with an excessive use of its military strength. This carries enormous, tremendous dangers for Mexico, which is included in a hegemonic agenda as a reliable supplier of raw materials, as a strategic security area, and now also as a supplier of manpower for wars: cannon fodder. This forces us to thoroughly reconsider the country's foreign policy, as I told the chief executive."

Munoz Ledo confirmed that the press release that the Office of President put out about the meeting was drafted jointly. "We agreed on the language, because though it is in the form of a press release, it actually has the substance of a joint communique."

As he gazes out at the Queretaro countryside, he muses:

"The chapter is not finished. I cannot yet say whether the meeting will have positive results. Only time will tell whether I was right or not."

* Cardenas on Dialogue

91CA0083B Mexico City PROCESO in Spanish No 746 18 Feb 91 pp 10-13

[Report by Carlos Puig]

[Text] Washington, D.C.—"I did not know about the meeting. I did not know that it was going to be held, but that does not change my position on a dialogue with the

government. Nor do I think that the party's position will change, inasmuch as it came out of a wide-ranging discussion in our recent congress."

"But what do you think of the meeting?"

"I know very little about it. I will tell you again that I was not informed and would rather not say anything without knowing the details. Good night."

The voice of Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, the engineer who heads the Party of the Democratic Revolution, sounded less happy and drier over the phone than it did 24 hours earlier, when this correspondent interviewed him in the cafeteria of the Barbison Hotel, where Cardenas had stayed during his five-day visit to New York.

On Monday the 11th, a couple of hours after receiving this correspondent's call in his hotel room, the PRD [Party of Democratic Revolution] leader had been informed from Mexico that Senator Porfirio Munoz Ledo, who along with Cardenas had founded the Democratic Current and the PRD, had met with President Carlos Salinas de Gortari "to analyze the new international scene and Mexico's position on the (Gulf) crisis...as well as the importance of substantially improving the democratic process in the country as a guarantee of the full exercise of national sovereignty," a bulletin from the Office of the President of the Republic explained.

During the interview with this correspondent on Sunday, 10 February, Cardenas spoke of his party with a view towards the legislative elections this summer and of the Free Trade Agreement that the administrations of Salinas and Bush want to sign this year, and he cautioned the two that "they have to be aware that any accord is repealable."

Cardenas said that the Salinas administration has become increasingly intolerant and that "steps backward have been taken" in Mexico's democratization, despite which he said that he was still optimistic about the country's future. "If the vote were respected, PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] would not win any elected post," he added, cautioning: "Change will come sooner than many think."

As for the dialogue between the PRD and PRI, he stated:

"The PRD has not refused to dialogue. This is a fallacy that many media have been guilty of, saying that the PRD does not want to talk. The PRD wants to talk, but it wants to know about what, on what terrain, and what the purposes of a dialogue are. We dialogue (with PRI) every day in Congress and we know for what purposes we are doing so. We dialogue in very different forums and we know for what purposes we are doing so.

"Since December 1988 we have said that we could go and discuss fundamental issues with the administration: how to move towards democracy, how to have a democratic election law that is equitable for all political parties, how to implement measures to improve the people's living conditions. We are willing to talk about all this with the administration. No one in the PRD has ever refused to do this."

"How do you explain that the two parties are saying that they are open to a dialogue and yet no dialogue takes place?"

"Because the administration has no desire to change. The point is not to have a dialogue of the deaf. I do not think that the administration is interested, and obviously we are not interested in that."

"But there seems to be a debate going on inside your party about this which has already cost it at least one resignation. And at times you are accused of being the one who does not want to talk with the administration."

"I think that all of the debates that have taken place in Congress have indicated very clearly that the party must maintain its independent line, its line of fighting for principles, of not giving in on the basic principles of democratizing Mexico and respecting the vote, for example.

"But this does not mean that we will not talk with those with whom we have to talk. If right now they call us up from Mexico and tell us that we have to go back and discuss how to put an end to the State Party, rest assured that I would be on a plane to Mexico this very day."

"Do you think that, for example, the National Accord for Democracy, which the PRD has proposed, would be an appropriate forum?"

"We are in agreement that the administration has to come to the Accord, but each will come when he has to. We are going to sit down with whoever has to be removed from power when there is sufficient capacity and strength so that whoever is going to be removed through democratic practices realizes that he is going to go and that he has to leave in the best way possible."

Cardenas defined the limits of the relationship between the PRD and the administration, his own relationship, and the relationship that he feels ought to exist. He categorically rejected that he was "anchored in anti-Salinasism," as Jorge Alcocer told this magazine when he submitted his resignation from the party (PROCESO 740).

"We are not against Salinas," Cardenas said; "we are against selling out, we are for democracy, we are for the exercise of the country's sovereignty, we are for the implementation of patriotic policies that raise the living standards of all Mexicans. If this is being for or against Salinas, you apply the labels. To me personally it is irrelevant who is implementing the measures that are not protecting the living standards of Mexicans."

Cardenas does not see the PRD as an organization that is "more a collection of grassroots movements than a party structure," as some of its members say:

"I think that it is everything. I think that the party is part of a broad and very deep grassroots mobilization. And the party, moreover, is organizing its mechanisms for action,

affiliation, communication, for being more efficient in political work. We are working in both directions."

Cardenas asserted that the PRD is different from the parties that gave rise to it: "It is completely different and substantially better than the organizations from which those of us who belong to it came."

"There is talk that your figure in the party carries so much weight that it unbalances the decision-making, that your opinion always wins out, and that a sort of blind loyalty to your person has developed in some parts of the PRD."

"I do carry a great deal of weight, unquestionably, because of how the party has developed and because of what happened in the 1987 and 1988 election campaigns. The party is developing its leaders and building its organizations, and this will tend to balance out. And as we institutionalize, the strength of the organization will outweigh my presence or that of any other leader. Moreover, I think that if I have had to say something, I have said it without thinking about what you call 'blind loyalty,' with which I do not agree. People debate, speak out, vote, and exercise democracy in the PRD. This is part of the consciousness-raising to build our democracy. The advantages of the influence that I have must be exploited, and its disadvantages must be reduced to a minimum."

The 1991 Elections

"Your party regards the administration as illegitimate and the electoral ground rules that this administration plays by as inappropriate. So how can you take part in elections, knowing of the risk that they will end in a confrontation?"

"We are convinced that the administration has no desire to change and respect the vote, so that there can be a change, a real move towards democracy. Yet the decisions that the party has made, particularly the decision that the First National Congress made in November, have been to keep the party running in elections. This continues to be discussed. But to keep the party running in elections, we know that we have to take several precautions, inasmuch as we are running at a disadvantage, given that the vote is not respected, that the electoral bodies are under the complete control of the administration, that there is an antidemocratic law that is conducive to all of the vices that we have seen in elections. Yet we have decided that we need to take part in elections, to organize ourselves to defend the elections with better tools and better than we have in the past.

"Of course the fact that we have been able to defend elections successfully does not relieve the administration of blame for its commission of fraud," the PRD president clarified.

The former governor of Michoacan added that mechanisms for defending the vote have been in preparation since December, mechanisms that include but are not limited to the presence of Mexican and foreign observers. "We know that the administration does not want observers of any kind, domestic or foreign. We know that obstacles will be put in their way, that they will not be given the facilities that they have been given in other elections in other countries, where they are familiar with the entire process. Yet we will try and see to it that there are observers, to the extent that this is possible."

"We know that this is not the factor that is going to alter the conditions for respecting or not respecting the vote, but we think that this is an important way to help defend an election, to try and clean it up."

"Are you worried that a party in its infancy, with several internal problems, may not be able to really defend the vote?"

"We are doing so and we will have to try as best we can. I do not know how much progress we will make, I do not know to what degree of perfection, and I put the word in quotes, we will succeed in setting up these kinds of defense apparatuses and mechanisms."

"In the states of the republic in which the PRD has the most followers and in which elections have been held, as in Michoacan, Guerrero, and Mexico State, and in which it therefore seemed easier to defend the vote, there has also been more electoral alchemy and eventually confrontation. Do you see violence as an inevitable consequence of this clash of stubborn wills?"

"Violence could be avoided if the administration did not engage in improper practices. This is the source of violence. If the administration wants to prevent violence, it obviously has all of the keys in its hands. We neither provoke nor generate it. We are the victims, in every instance. The dead belong to the PRD; they are from our side."

"What do you think the consequences of election violence have been?"

"I think that it has two effects. It creates an awareness that this regime of a State Party must be replaced if we really want the citizens to decide freely how the country is to be governed. And it unquestionably discourages people, which is what the administration is after; it lowers the turnout, intimidates. But this works both ways."

"Do you think that this intimidation effect will be a factor in the legislative elections this year?"

"These elections bring out fewer voters; this is obvious and happens all over the world. We cannot think that a midterm election is going to attract as much attention as one in which all of the country's government posts are at stake. There is going to be a great deal of attention now on those spots in which the state governments and the municipal governments, besides the legislatures, are at stake."

Cardenas then made this prediction for 1991: "If there is no fraud, the ruling party will not win a single elected post. We will have a legislature with very few representatives of the administration."

Free Trade

In the United States Cardenas introduced his "Continental Development and Trade Initiative." It seeks "a pact with a broader vision that includes civil rights and the particular interests of each country, a trade and investment accord, yes, but one that also includes cooperation arrangements that are advantageous to all parties." As for the Free Trade Agreement that the Salinas administration is after, he cautions that "the United States must be aware that an accord that is negotiated behind the back of the Mexican people and that does not improve their situation can be repealed at any time, under international law."

Cardenas comments that his stand on the Free Trade Agreement and the fact that he has been invited to the United States have sharpened administration criticism of him:

"Intolerance has worsened and will continue to worsen. They do not like anyone establishing other possibilities and contacts with sectors other than the ones that they would like to deal with exclusively here in the United States. It is obvious that it is worse against the PRD, because it represents an alternative for change, one that questions and competes with them."

"Lastly, Mr. Cardenas, after the 1988 election you spoke of beginning the process of democratizing Mexico, but since then there has been more electoral violence than in previous years; the positions of the PRD and PRI have become polarized; a new election law that you consider worse than the previous one was enacted; the Free Trade Agreement is close to being signed, in spite of opposition. Do you see these developments as negative for democratization in Mexico?"

"I am an optimist. Mexico is going to change, and there is going to be democracy in Mexico. Mexico will live under a democratic regime."

"What grounds do you have for your optimism?"

"I am in contact with many people in the country. I travel through many regions of Mexico, and my perception is that the democratic forces continue to grow and are organizing better and better. This will have to translate into a political organization to impose change."

"How far down the line do you see change?"

"I will not set a date for it. I think that it will come sooner than many think."

"In 1994?"

"Or before."

Request for Extradition of ETA Member Denied

PA0404235891 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0350 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Mexico City, 3 Apr (NOTIMEX)—Tenth District Court Judge Luis Perez de la Fuente has denied Spain's request to extradite the alleged ETA [Basque Homeland and Liberty] terrorist Esteban Murillo Zubiri, otherwise known as Jose Azcona Uriz. The judge denied Spain's request for Murillo Zubiri's extradition at the expiration of the legal period of time allowed to issue the ruling.

The ruling shall be sent to the Foreign Relations Secretariat for its communication to Spain.

In his ruling, the judge noted that the extradition request violates Article Eight of the law that stipulates that persons cannot be extradited to a country where they are politically persecuted.

The defense, the judge noted, demonstrated that Murillo Zubiri is a labor union member who struggles for the Basque people's causes. The fact that he is linked to the ETA terrorist group gives him political status.

The ruling also states that the Attorney General's Office did not present evidence that would satisfy the prerequisites of some of the clauses in the Extradition and Mutual Assistance Treaty signed between Mexico and Spain.

Within the context of the process in which he was tried for violating the general law and using false documents, for which he was sentenced to nine months in prison, Murillo Zubiri can request his temporary release by posting a bail of 10 million pesos at the 10th District Court.

El Salvador

Government, FMLN Discuss Peace in Mexico City

PA0404160691 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1943 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] Mexico City, 3 Apr (NOTIMEX)—Representatives of the Salvadoran Government arrived in Mexico City today to participate in another round of talks tomorrow with members of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) in an effort to attain peace in that Central American country.

The Salvadoran officials were escorted out of the airport by members of the Government Secretariat amid strict security and were not able to make a statement.

UN Representative Alvaro de Soto arrived yesterday in Mexico City for the negotiations, as did Raul Hercules and Jose Melendez—who will participate in the talks for the first time—to represent the Salvadoran rebels.

The UN information director in Mexico, Mario Zamorano, welcomed the government delegation and reported that the FMLN brings a new proposal that will allow them to achieve substantial progress in the negotiations that will surely be held in Oaxtepec, Morelos.

The proposal involves dividing the topics to be discussed at the talks and a pledge from the Salvadoran Government to make substantial changes in its administration so that all political forces may truly participate in the electoral process and to resolve the nation's economic crisis.

Zamorano said that the Group of Rio and the EEC will issue a statement advocating a negotiated solution to the conflict during a meeting that will be held later this month in Luxembourg.

Will Meet Until Accord Reached

PA0404160891 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0013 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] San Jose, 3 Apr (ACAN - EFE)—Salvadoran Deputy Foreign Minister Ricardo Valdivieso reported in Costa Rica today that the meeting of government and guerrilla delegates, which opened in Mexico City today, will continue until "substantial agreements" between both sides are reached.

Valdivieso, who was accompanied by Salvadoran Duputy Defense Minister General Orlando Zepeda said after meeting with Hernan Castro, Costa Rican deputy foreign minister: "It will be a round-the-clock meeting because time is running short. No one will leave until we reach an agreement."

Valdivieso, Zepeda, and Castro discussed demilitarization in Central America within the framework of a Security Commission meeting to be held in Nicaragua on 12 April.

"I feel that we will come out with what the people want, that is, substantial agreements," Valdivieso said.

Valdivieso and Zepeda underlined the need to expedite negotiations with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN], particularly regarding constitutional reforms, so the Legislative Assembly can approve them this month.

According to Salvadoran law, constitutional reforms must be approved in two legislative sessions. The new Legislative Assembly, elected in the 10 March elections, will be installed on 1 June.

In the Mexico City meeting, in addition to the constitutional reforms, the government and FMLN delegates are considering the Armed Forces issue, the most controversial of all topics included in the agenda agreed upon in May, and a cease-fire that the guerrillas have proposed to make effective prior to 30 May.

Zepeda also said that he is hopeful for a cease-fire even prior to the date proposed by the rebels, and that in this Mexico City meeting the Armed Forces delegation will be "able and empowered" to make decisions.

Zepeda said that the reduction of the Armed Forces, made up of approximately 60,000 men, will be carried out as pacification in El Salvador progresses because the Army's increased size is due precisely to the guerrillas' "aggression."

FMLN Announces Peace Outline

PA0404182891 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 4 Apr 91

["Peace proposal" announced by the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) at the San Jose VII meeting in Managua on 19 March]

[Text] The purpose of the FMLN initiative is to hasten the peace negotiations in El Salvador. It makes comprehensive changes during these negotiations by calling for:

1. A reduction in the number of agenda items to be agreed upon prior to the cease-fire.

2. Simultaneous and intense discussion of the agenda.

3. The introduction of the issue of a cease-fire, which was stated in the final point of the agenda.

4. Agreement on constitutional reform prior to the conclusion of the current Legislative Assembly term.

This plan is realistic because it allows the sides to compromise, which makes it possible for them to be more flexible, depending on the issue; to make concessions; or to postpone discussion of certain topics until the second phase of the negotiations, which creates conditions for a cease-fire.

The FMLN believes that the hopes for peace of the Salvadoran people and the international community

demand an immediate response. The violent resistance seen among ruling sectors in El Salvador that are opposed to the negotiations, such as the destruction of the news media, murder, attacks, provocations, and electoral fraud, are signs of the war's end.

A majority of forces in the nation and around the world support the negotiations and have created an irreversible framework for a political solution. A period of 10 years is more than enough time to conclude that it is impossible to resolve the conflict by military means, or delay the negotiations with a view toward seeking surrender or unilateral disarmament. A military stalemate must be accepted and conditions of respect must be established for the forces so that the war can come to an end.

The broadest of political opportunities must be opened to all forces and the conflict must be allowed to end within a framework of reconciliation and along a path of political struggle, until we achieve conditions suitable for total nationwide disarmament and the predominance of civilian society.

The negotiating process has progressed amid a framework of seriousness and under the auspices of the United Nations, but until today we have concentrated on a single point on the agenda, which renders changes in positions difficult because we cannot foresee the course of agreements on other subjects.

Meanwhile, we are not achieving the conditions for a cease-fire. Our current pace may delay the achievement of peace. The FMLN declares itself in favor of stepping up negotiations for the purpose of producing an outcome during its first phase and achieving an end to the armed conflict within the shortest possible period of time.

FMLN's initiative to accelerate negotiations:

This is an initiative to expedite definitive peace by accelerating the negotiations and establishing a cease-fire as soon as is practical:

1. Simultaneously discuss the three basic topics in the Caracas agenda—the Armed Forces, constitutional reform, and a cease-fire.

2. Draw up conditions for both sides to meet the proposed objectives and organize longer-lasting and more comprehensive working meetings.

3. Immediately begin discussion of the cease-fire with the participation of the military chiefs of both sides.

4. Incorporate political parties and social forces into the negotiations as best as possible so that they can contribute to the discussion of basic topics and try to bring about debate on the rest of the Caracas agenda.

5. Make every effort to reach agreements on constitutional reform before the current Legislative Assembly term ends on 30 April.

This will make it possible to comply with the first step stipulated by the Constitution. Agreements on the three basic topics should be reached no later than 30 May. Discussions should include as many aspects of the rest of the agenda as possible to conclude the first stage of the negotiations, thus establishing a cease-fire and continuing the negotiations.

The cease-fire:

Based on the objective reality of a military link between the sides, the FMLN proposes consideration of the following.

1. The existence of two conflicting forces, each with its own characteristics, within the framework of a national military, territorial, and political reality.

2. The existence of geographical space based on the extent of the territory controlled by each of the contending military forces and the social and political realities that are the result of war.

3. The need to carry out the greatest degree of demilitarization throughout the national territory to guarantee the largest possible space.

4. Operation of all political forces within the national territory, where respect for human rights and the full exercise of freedom of expression are guaranteed.

5. International verification.

This initiative stands a considerable chance of becoming a reality. So does the possibility of ending armed confrontation in El Salvador and leading the country rapidly to definitive peace.

[Signed] The FMLN

Rebel Commmander Expresses Hope

PA0504060391 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Prior to departing for Mexico to participate in the new round of talks between the government and the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front], rebel commander Jorge Melendez emphasized the Salvadoran people's demand for an end to the war. He also noted that, on this occasion, the FMLN will seek to sign specific agreements on a cease-fire.

FMLN Commander Jorge Melendez, whose nom de guerre is Jonas and who operates in Morazan Department, said that the guerrillas hope the government will adopt a flexible position in the next round of talks to be held in Mexico on 4 April.

At the San Jose VII meeting held in Managua last month, the FMLN proposed a cease-fire with the Salvadoran Government. This cease-fire would take effect before 30 May. The FMLN also proposed a speeding up of discussions on the Armed Forces and the constitutional reforms.

Commander Jonas said that the government must be flexible at this new meeting so that new specific agreements to put an end to more than a decade of war can be reached.

[Begin Melendez recording] We hope that the government will put aside its hypocritical and rhetorical stands in an effort to hold more effective negotiations. Arguments will emerge, no doubt. However, we hope to hold talks that are more active and that will include a more effective mediation and a greater awareness from the international community. We also hope to see that the Salvadoran people play a more active role with a staunch fighting spirit. It all depends on that. We have made a proposal to change the framework of the talks, and we hope to find a less rhetorical attitude, less deceit, from the government and the Salvadoran Armed Forces. [end recording]

Melendez added that a passive attitude by all the social forces in the country, an attitude of not committing themselves to attaining peace, could harm the proposal presented by the FMLN and spoil the efforts for a cease-fire prior to 30 May. The rebel commander said that the people must realize that this is the right moment to change the country's history.

Nicaragua

Ex-Soldiers, Peasants Threaten To Occupy Land

PA0504030791 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1200 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] On 3 April, former members of the National Resistance [RN], demobilized EPS [Sandinist People's Army] members, and peasants of the ATC [Farm Workers Association] in Region 2 gave the government until 20 April to fulfill its promise of land grants. Otherwise, they threatened to take over tracts of land in the western part of the country.

Sandinist Deputy Alonso Porras publicized the request at the National Assembly on 3 April, where he read a letter signed by Sergio Carvajal Gomez, a member of the RN; Basilio (Barillas Picado), a member of the Retired Soldiers Association; and Salvador Ramirez Angulo, an ATC member.

The letter reiterated that patience has run out. It said that the RN, the ATC, and the Retired Soldiers Association are tired of waiting for the government to fulfill its promises while, at the same time, giving priority to land owners and businessmen.

Claiming that the National Assembly Agrarian Commission has been unable to meet land demands in the western part of the country, Porras urged the National Assembly President Alfredo Cesar to order the commission to take action, so that bloodshed in Region 2 may be prevented.

Panama

PRD Charges Endara Firm With Money Laundering

DEA Documents Cited

PA0504040191 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Passages in quotation marks are recorded]

[Text] Using a DEA report as a basis, the PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party] has charged that the Solis, Endara, and Delgado law firm is involved in money laundering operations.

The charges, which were presented by Gerardo Gonzalez, PRD president and legislator, point out that Ivette Torres, a special DEA agent assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Panama in August 1990, filed a sworn statement in a Miami court on the case of Augusto Falcon and Salvador Magluta. It has been proved that these two men imported over 1,000 kg of cocaine to the United States every month.

[G. Gonzalez] "An investigation into the finances of the Falcon-Magluta association disclosed that approximately 150 foreign and U.S. corporations were formed in the name of this organization, with the purpose of hiding profits from illegal drug trafficking. Several of these corporations were formed in Panama."

The statements by Ivette Torres point out that the accounts of Hassid Enterprises, Inc.; Enterprises Ramadan, Inc.; Motores Marinos de Panama, S.A.; Copan Marine Services, Inc.; Southern Farms, Inc., and Pilea, S.A. in Panamanian banks are based on money resulting from drug trafficking and money laundering.

[G. Gonzalez] "All of these corporations that are mentioned in the sworn statement by Ivette Torres have Hernan Delgado Q. as the director-president, Cesar Guevara Q. as secretary, and Guillermo Endara Galimany as treasurer. The resident agent of these companies is the Solis, Endara, and Delgado law firm."

Meanwhile, Legislator Leo Gonzalez, president of the ad hoc commission that should investigate these charges, pointed out that the charges might be turned over to the Office of the Attorney General.

[L. Gonzalez] "At any rate, we have a duty to the Panamanian people to investigate any drug case we feel is important, and to try to find a solution if possible."

On the other hand, the president of the Arnulfist wing in the Legislative Assembly pointed out that these charges are seeking to mar the image of President Guillermo Endara.

[Francisco Artola] "This is being done as if we did not know that in this country lawyers may form all sorts of companies, all sorts of companies authorized by the law,

stock companies, and one is not responsible for what that stock company or the share holders want to do with their licenses."

Endara Strongly Rejects Charge

PA0504042891 Panama City Radio Exitosa in Spanish 0223 GMT 5 Apr 91

[Text] President Guillermo Endara held an urgent news conference a few minutes ago to deny accusations made this afternoon by Gerardo Gonzalez, president of the Democratic Revolutionary Party. Gonzalez had reported that DEA agents had provided him with information on the alleged participation of the president in money laundering operations.

President Endara said emphatically that he never had anything to do with companies involved in money laundering operations. Let us listen to President Endara:

[Begin Endara recording] You must take two facts into consideration. First, I have never participated, directly or indirectly, in money laundering or drug trafficking operations. I am a professional lawyer and as such, when I practiced as a lawyer, I tried to occupy the Presidency [as heard]. I was responsible for organizing many corporations [sociedades anonimas].

For a long time, we were friends with a U.S. colleague named Juan Acosta, who was recommended to our law firm by a very dear client. We organized some corporations with Mr. Juan Acosta. Six of these corporations are mentioned in a document, which was not signed, that has been given to you. It is true that these six companies were established by our law firm and that we assumed the role of not only organizing the law firm but also the board of directors and resident agents; this is a common occurrence in Panama. We empowered a law firm in North America to operate these corporations.

At no time did we learn of any of the activities of these six corporations, nor did we participate in their activities. In 1987, when the political crisis began, our client thought that I and some other members of our law firm were prominent figures of the opposition to the military regime of General Noriega. As a result, we were asked to leave those corporations and let other local law firms take over. Since 1987, we have had nothing to do with those corporations. They changed their board of directors and resident agents. We do not know of their final fate or their actions.

We never participated in the activities of these corporations. The assertion that I have participated in money laundering or drug trafficking operations, based on the affidavit—which was not signed—that was distributed at the Legislative Assembly, is an act of slander. I will denounce this as slander.

I do not know Gonzalez' exact words. I am going to revise them. I understand that in his statements he was very careful not to accuse me directly.

I want to add something. At the beginning of my presidential term, U.S. officials asked us to give them information on these six corporations and I believe some others. As our client Juan Acosta had passed away, and we were told that these companies may be involved in illegal operations, we gave all the confidential information available to us to the DEA agents.

We gave that information to DEA officials with the guarantee—we believed that it was a serious guarantee—that those investigations and our participation and cooperation in them would be kept confidential and secret. That was not the case. Somehow, unsigned documents have been handed to the PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party] president. [end recording]

That was His Excellency President Guillermo Endara denying charges leveled against him by PRD President Gerardo Gonzalez that the president had ties with companies involved in money laundering in Panama City.

President Endara pointed out that he does not know for sure who gave that information to the PRD president, but he added that he suspects that it came from U.S. sources. Endara added that he will take strong measures against the PRD president for making those charges against him.

We must point out that PRD President Gerardo Gonzalez tried to present his charges against President Endara to the plenary session of the Legislative Assembly, but after he was denied that opportunity Gonzalez called a news conference and leveled his charges against President Endara.

Endara Justifies Security Force Arms Purchase

Protection Again Coup Argued

PA0504051591 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 4 Apr 91 p 2A

[Article by Orlando Mendieta C.]

[Text] President Guillermo Endara Galimany has said that the weapons purchase for the Institutional Protection Service [SPI] is important for the protection of the Presidential Palace.

Endara stated that he must protect the Presidential Palace and make it impenetrable to anyone who may attempt a coup d'etat, given that today the palace is the center of power, unlike in the past when the center of power was located at the [Panama Defense Forces] General Headquarters.

In that respect, he called himself a comrade-in-arms of those who defend the Presidency, because he (Endara) will be defending it if anything should happen.

Endara denied that providing the SPI with weapons signifies that some type of militarism will be introduced, he claimed that the move is aimed to safeguard the

Presidential Palace and to ensure that the center of power will never return to the military headquarters.

The president argued that if the Presidential Palace is not defended, any "hot-headed soldier" could perpetrate an attempt against democracy and the constitutional regime.

When asked why members of the Public Force were not being used for protection, Endara said that he trusted them, but he did not trust certain outside elements that may have influence on the institution. He added that "one must be very careful" in matters of security.

Arms Reportedly From Israel

PA0504043391 Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 4 Apr 91 p 4

["Period and That Is It" column by Jaime Ortega: "Macabre Importation"]

[Text] The 3 April issue of the daily LA PRENSA has on its front page a report that has startled all Panamanians. The report states that Carlos "Toti" Bares, the director of the Institutional Protection Service [SPI], arranged the purchase of high-caliber weapons as well as Uzi submachine guns and ammunition for 9-mm weapons from Israel. The newspaper also reports that the arms were brought across the Costa Rican border and that an effort was made to make the people bringing them in pay taxes and a confusing situation resulted.

Later, the Presidency established communication with the border and ordered that the arms be allowed to pass expeditiously because they were to be used by the Presidency's security apparatus. The Panamanian people have some questions regarding this issue. Why has the loquacious general director of customs not denied this report? Why has the loquacious general director of customs not told the country why the macabre arms were imported? Why does the trashy group that accompanies Endara in his off-target decisions insist on having its own Army, when the country, after 21 years of dictatorship, does not want to hear about personal armies such as the one Noriega had and Endara now has? Who is Bares? What kind of an education does he have? Where did he study military intelligence? Where did he study, period? What enables him to order the fearsome importation of arms?

Yesterday my column dealt with the social obligations we have with the Panamanian people. I said that Comptroller General Carles is not infallible. I spoke about rationally using the resources made available by the comptroller, whose economic watch is 25 years behind because of his mistaken concept of the economy. I ask the comptroller: Who is paying for these arms? What government money was used to buy the arms? All deadly weapons are expensive, and if the report published by LA PRENSA is true, I ask you, Mr. Comptroller: Could we not have resolved the problems of many looted schools with the money that has been used to create the private army of Endara and company? The people see with sadness that they lack food, medicine, and water, while $500 million sit in the National Bank in the form of bank deposits, and most of that money is state money.

If the report is true, then you, Mr. Comptroller, have acted irresponsibly by letting four crazy Arnulfistas who do not represent the Arnulfista majority spend money that could have solved many problems of many poor families. Only the enemies of democracy can think that a coup is possible in Panama. I think that the true intention behind this could be the creation of a well-armed Army, with the excuse of the notorious coup attempt that never took place.

May God shield this simple and humble nation and keep it from falling again in the hands of terrorists and paramilitary elements. No one is going to carry out any coup. Tell the truth about the intentions behind the macabre importation.

PDC on Endara's Charge of Weapons Importation

PA0504060191 Panama City Circuito RPC Radio in Spanish 0512 GMT 5 Apr 91

[Statement issued by the National Political Committee of the Christian Democratic Party in Panama City on 5 April]

[Text] The Christian Democratic Party [PDC] flatly rejects President Endara's charge that the PDC is importing weapons. The documents presented as alleged evidence reveal at first glance the absolute absence of grounds for the charge. They are documents which are both dated October 1990, signed by the respective security chiefs of the Housing Ministry and by the office of Panama City's mayor, on official paper, with the respective note numbers, which were sent to a local firm to the manager's attention.

In other words, nothing in the documents points to any secret or clandestine intention. Moreover, such documents do not constitute requisitions, much less purchase orders. The president knows that such a thing requires the participation of the respective higher offices, of the Finance and Treasury Ministry and the Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic.

It is noted that other documents of the Housing Ministry, dated February 1991, confirm that the deputy minister of housing, an outstanding member of the Arnulfist Party, shared concern about the weapons acquisition for the official personnel who are treasury guards, and that the comptroller's auditor knew of this concern.

The accusation also lacks any valid pretext. The criticism leveled by two PDC legislators was based on statements according to which the president agreed to support the importation of an arms shipment by the Institutional Protection Service [SPI], which has been the object of intense public debate.

The fact that the president later denied that transaction did not prevent the people from believing its initial confirmation for two days. If the president's intention, with such a grave accusation lacking any foundation and pretext, is to bring about a crisis in government he must know that the PDC has no fear of continuing the struggle for democracy in Panama from the position an opposition and with the same devotion and honesty as it has held while in the government.

In this case the president must speak clearly and he will receive the same response from the PDC.

Panama City, 4 April 1991

Arnulfista Party Criticizes Christian Democrats

PA0504135591 Panama City Radio KW Continente in Spanish 1225 GMT 5 Apr 91

[Communique issued by the Arnulfista Party in Panama City; read by Deputy Secretary General Hector Penalba—live]

[Text] The Arnulfista Party hereby reiterates to the Panamanian nation its constitutional, nationalist, and democratic commitment. Historically we have always stood on the side of the genuine aspirations of our people. Because of this, we will not hesitate to support and defend with all available means the mandate that the great majority of the people endowed upon Guillermo Endara Galimany. The Christian Democratic Party [PDC], a member party of the government coalition, in collusion with dark forces in an uncovered plot, has accused the president of criminal activity. The truth, which they know, is very different.

Their insatiable ambition has led the PDC, not only to monopolize most public positions—a situation which the president has tolerated with great patience even though this monopoly has acted to the detriment of his party—but to slander and discredit the president with reckless accusations rejected by the people. The Arnulfista Party will walk alone rather than be tripped and deal with such treachery.

We challenge the PDC to make good on its threat to leave the government. Only then will we be able to govern with proven loyalty and sincere patriotism to give the people the well-being they deserve amid productive peace and devoted effort to resolve the problems of those who are dispossessed.

[Signed] Francisco Artola, acting president of the Arnulfista Party

Hector Penalba, deputy secretary general of the Arnulfista Party

Endara Cited on Talks Promoted by Civic Crusade

PA0504053891 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 4 Apr 91 p 1

[Text] President Guillermo Endara said that he hopes the meeting between party representatives and the Civic Crusade "is limited to the discussion of the subject" that inspired the meetings, and added that no attempt should be made to create an alternate cabinet council.

Endara added that according to the reports on the talks, politicians are "meddling" in matters concerning the economic plan which should only pertain to the cabinet council.

Endara asked, "How can another group meet at the same time to discuss economic matters?" He predicted the failure of the talks if the attempts are contrary to the principles of the government's efforts.

"I will not allow a group parallel to the cabinet to begin developing an economic policy," Endara said in direct reference to the Civic Crusade.

In addition, he asked politicians "not to excite the public with newspaper and television debates," which, "with justifiable reasons," have been severely criticized by those who want more serious public statements.

In response to similar statements made by President Endara on 2 April, Civic Crusade coordinator Alberto Conte said he could not understand the harshness of the president's statements.

Conte added, "We are surprised to see that where the president used to invite all possible solutions, he is now suggesting that it is unacceptable for someone to mention any details concerning a change in plans."

Meanwhile, a source close to the talks told LA PRENSA that the agenda being discussed by the leading parties within the ruling alliance since 1 April does not in any of its points include the redistribution of power or a possible cabinet change. It only includes the discussion of conceptual political matters.

The solutions that have been included in the agenda will be presented this Saturday, 6 April, during a new meeting that will be mediated by the Civic Crusade and that was urgently convened to end differences among political parties.

The agenda deals with the unemployment problem, the reactivation of the justice system, the economic plan, and other political issues that are being kept in reserve so the executive branch can review them and make statements.

In addition the ADOC [Civic Democratic Opposition Alliance] will hold a meeting on Friday, 5 April, to talk about matters of national interest. The presidents of the ruling parties, the coordinators of the legislative factions, and the president with his ministers will participate in the ADOC meeting.

The meeting will represent the resumption of talks among the members of the ruling alliance aimed at delivering the country from the deadlock it has been in since the internal political struggle for greater shares of power began.

The second round of talks ended yesterday in a very private manner, and only a portion of the proposed agenda was made known.

According to Alberto Conte, however, after the meeting, which was held at the APEDE [Panamanian Association of Business Executives] offices, the alliance "came out stronger, and it will once again become the force that overthrew the military dictatorship."

Christian Democratic Party [PDC] leaders Guillermo Cochez, Milton Henriquez, and Ivan Romero, Authentic Liberal Party leaders Julio Ramirez and Jose de la Rosa, Molirena [Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement] leader Guillermo Quijano, and Arnulfist Party leader Hector Penalba participated in the meeting.

The political party representatives refrained from making comments about specific points of the agenda, but Conte said that during the sessions there was "a spirit of commendable conciliation."

Conte indicated that the agenda should be discussed by each of the ruling parties. "It is a short agenda that seeks to put an end to the fighting and restore harmony," Conte said.

Even though the ruling parties have held various sessions to avoid a breakup of the alliance, political analysts doubt that unity will be achieved because of the big differences of interest and ideology that exist among the different ADOC parties. Meanwhile, PDC Legislator Gloria Moreno de Lopez said Endara's remarks regarding the talks held by the ruling parties are "unfortunate and discouraging."

The president said the ruling parties will fail in the talks that are taking place if they try to draft a government plan in addition to the one that has already been implemented since his administration took over in December 1989.

The legislator [Gloria Moreno de Lopez] also said the political posts occupied by the PDC "have not been a gift of the president. We reached them through the huge number of votes we received in 1989."

Labor Leader Calls For 5 Apr Demonstrations

PA0404135691 Panama City Radio KW Continente in Spanish 1211 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Labor leader Isaac Rodriguez [secretary general of the Institute of Hydraulic Resources and Electrification labor union], has announced that all of the popular forces in the country are invited to a demonstration at 1600 on 5 April at Plaza Cinco de Mayo by all of the people who have been subjected to abuses under this regime. Guidance will be provided to the working class so that they can make the necessary plans for 1 May [labor day], which will be a day of numerous gatherings throughout the country.

Rodriguez pointed out that the workers would continue to base their actions on reason and justice, and that they would not employ violence—which is what the government wants. He said that the workers will defeat the government by legal means.

Rodriguez disclosed that the membership of [a union] which constitutes over 90 percent of the union members in the United States, has established 15 April as the deadline for the Panamanian Government to act in favor of the workers and show respect for the country's labor union rights. If changes are not made in the government's current labor policy, the union members will prevent delivery of all cargo that arrives in the United States from Panama, and they will also block the shipment of U.S. products imported by Panama, as happened in Haiti and the Dominican Republic when those countries violated the rights of their labor unions.

On the morning of 3 April, Rodriguez leads a group of workers who for several months have been walking picket lines every day in front of the headquarters of the National Bank, to demand that the Supreme Court—which has its offices in that building—state its position concerning the lawsuit charging unconstitutionality filed against Law No. 25. Rodriguez said that the workers are asking the Supreme Court to state its position at once, because the attorney for the administration has stated his position and now the Supreme Court must do likewise.

Vice President Arias Comments on Alliance Unity

PA0404161291 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] Government and Justice Minister Dr. Ricardo Arias Calderon has said that the Christian Democratic Party [PDC] holds the government posts the people's will granted the party and it is up to President Guillermo Endara to make whatever appointments he may see fit. Arias replied in this manner when asked about his party's willingness to relinquish political opportunities to improve the government alliance's interparty relations.

[Begin recording] [Arias] I believe that the distribution of government duties took place in accordance with the people's will and with the agreement of the president, who has the constitutional authority to make the appointments. These are the factors that had to do with the current distribution of government duties. Up to now, none of these two factors has been changed; the people's will has not changed and neither has the president's will to maintain the government team as it is today.

[Unidentified reporter] Would PDC officials be willing to resign if the president so requested ?

[Arias] The president has the constitutional authority to appoint and to request resignations.

[Reporter] What is your opinion of the president's remarks that he mistrusts certain former Public Force members who might still be meddling with the force?

[Arias] I do not know of any former Public Force member who meddles in the force.

[Reporter] The president mentioned [Lieutenant Colonel Aristides] Valdonedo and [Lieutenant Colonel Fernando] Quesada.

[Arias] Both are on vacation and on the path to retirement. Their retirment has already been agreed on once their vacations end. They have no connection with the National Police or the Government and Justice Ministry.

[Reporter] Who are the officers under arrest in connection with the phone-tapping case?

[Arias] None, as far as I know.

[Reporter] Do you believe that the crisis within the alliance has now been overcome?

[Arias] All government alliances go through difficult times. If there is a desire to solve these difficult times, then they are resolved; if there is no desire to solve them, then the alliance breaks up. When there is no longer a desire to solve these problems, then the alliance will be broken up. The alliance is working; this means that there has been a willingness to resolve these problems. [end recording]

After issuing the statements to both the national press and to those gathered outside the presidential palace, Dr. Arias Calderon was required by the Institutional Protection Service to go past the metal detector used on strangers, before being allowed to go upstairs to attend the cabinet council. The bodyguard who normally accompanies him was ordered to leave his gun at the entrance.

Commentary Condemns Search of 1st Vice President

PA0404232891 Panama City Radio KW Continente in Spanish 1200 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Unattributed station commentary: "The Unforgivable"]

[Text] It was unpleasant, crude, and disrespectful. For a few moments on 3 April, Panama was the site of a spectacle that left all the people dumbfounded. It was quite embarrasing to see a top official from the executive branch subjected to a humiliating search as he walked up the steps of the Presidency.

We were all shocked when, last evening, Dr. Ricardo Arias Calderon, the first vice president of the republic, friend, and companion of the president, was subjected to an unmerciful search by the arrogant presidential security guards, as if he were a dangerous criminal or a paid assasin on his way to perform an assasination.

The Panamanian stage is full of memorable scenes, such as the one in which President Arnulfo Arias Madrid haughtily descended the bloodied steps of the Palace of the Herons, amidst military fire, to solemnly shout his famous words: we shall return. Also, there is the scene in which narco dictator Manuel Antonio Noriega Moreno slipped away under cover of night like a cowardly animal to the U.S. helicopter that would take him to a Miami jail. There are many other scenes, some of which make us shudder, and others that infuriate us and make us think of the wretchedness of politicians' souls. However, yesterday's scene at the presidential palace truly made us feel the most intense pain: the pain of seeing how low a human being is capable of dropping when he allows himself to be carried away by such ignoble passions as bitterness, hatred, and treason at its highest level of intensity.

It is obvious that the guards at the mansion on the bay who searched the first vice president wanted the people, indeed the entire Republic, to see the incident. They thought that in this public and shameless manner, the humiliation would prove all the more painful, but they were mistaken. They were mistaken because they have elevated Dr. Ricardo Arias Calderon's political figure and placed it on a much higher pedestal than the one on which it has always stood. During the most serious moments in the struggle for freedom and justice, Arias Calderon was the voice, blood, and flag of the popular vanguard.

Ricardo Arias Calderon was abused and disrespected, but his greatness, nobility, and dignity will continue untouched, and those alienated and confused individuals who gave the aberrant order for him to be searched will never have peaceful consciences. The disrespect and lack of consideration shown to the vice president on 3 April has truly offended the people, who have in Dr. Arias Calderon, one of their most authentic leaders for democracy and justice.

Whoever gave the order for the search does not have the faintest idea or intelligence concerning the enormity of the damage inflicted on the country. This damage goes beyond stupor and repugnance; its scars will be deeply engraved in the nation's soul and will reverberate with catastrophic resonance and fatal vision far beyond our borders, further deteriorating the image of a nation that is drifting blindly, without helmsman or direction, into the eye of the storm.

In the lives of people and men, there are events and circumstances which, while they may be painful, may prompt us to feel sympathy, disdain, or pity toward our

attackers; these we can forget and even forgive. However, what was done to Ricardo Arias Calderon at the home of his own government, of his own friend and companion, this my friends, will never be forgotten, let alone forgiven.

Endara Appoints Canal Area Advisory Council

PA0504001591 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 3 Apr 91 pp 1A, 2A

[Text] President Guillermo Endara Galimany, exercising his authority, has signed Decree No. 18 of 2 April 1991, which appoints the members to the Canal Area Advisory Council [Consejo Consultivo del Area del Canal].

The principals of the advisory council are Guillermo Quijano Jr., Jorge R. Riba, and Eduardo Miro. Their deputies are Adolfo de Obarrio, Juan Cristobal Zuniga, and Jorge Rubio, respectively. These are two-year ad honorem appointments.

The advisory council, in accordance with Law 1 of 14 January 1991, will also be comprised of the ministers of planning and economic policy, finance and treasury, foreign relations, housing, presidency, and commerce and industries, or their respecti /e deputy ministers; and also of the presidents of the Legislative Assembly's Housing and Panama Canal Affairs Commissions.

The council's duties will be to produce the draft decrees that will regulate Law 1 of 14 January 1991; to review and update all the draft programs, draft bills, and bills on the use, management, and disposal of the assets that have reverted and will revert to Panama; and to draw up and submit a document containing the points of reference for the drafting of the Overall Plan for the Use, Conservation, and Development of the Canal Area, which will be presented to the cabinet for a draft bill to be prepared.

Whenever it deems necessary, the council may seek the advice of persons or commissions with specialized qualifications to ensure that the best solutions will be proposed, and may seek the opinion of professional groups or social sectors related to those issues and problems on which the council must prepare documents, submit proposals, issue statements, or carry out any of its obligations.

Decree No. 18 (of 2 April 1991)

By which the members of the Canal Area Advisory Council are appointed.

The president of the Republic, exercising his authority,

Whereas:
That pursuant to Law No. 1 of 14 January 1991, the Canal Area Advisory Council is hereby created.
That paragraph H of Article 12 of Law 1 of 14 January 1991 states that three principals and their alternates shall be appointed by the Executive Branch.

Decrees:

Article 1: Appoint the following persons as members of the Canal Area Advisory Council:
Principal: Guillermo Quijano Jr. Alternate: Adolfo de Obarrio.
Principal: Jorge R. Riba. Alternate: Juan Cristobal Zuniga.
Principal: Eduardo Miro. Alternate: Jorge Rubio.

Article 2: These are two-year appointments.

Article 3: These are ad honorem appointments.

Article 4: This decree will be in effect upon its approval.

Be it promulgated and executed.
Issued in Panama City on 2 April 1991.
Guillermo Endara Galimany, president of the republic
Guillermo A. Ford B., minister of planning and economic policy

Editorial Views Diplomatic Ties With USSR

PA0404235291 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 3 Apr 91 p 4A

[Unattributed editorial: "Diplomatic Relations Between Panama and the USSR"]

[Text] Five years ago, during the turbulent preperestroyka era, the establishment of relations between Panama and the Soviet Union would have been the source of heated diplomatic and political debates. The military dictatorship, especially during the Third-World-rhetoric days of the Torrijos period, did not dare go that far. Now, however, the Foreign Ministry of the current democratic regime has reported, as an affirmation of our sovereignty in the framework of contemporary international relations, that relations with the Eastern world power are official. This decision has been accepted and seriously respected.

In Panama's diplomatic circles, it had been unofficially known for months that the Soviet Government of Mikhail Gorbachev was interested in formalizing commercial and other ties with Panama. It is common to see Soviet merchant ships crossing the canal. The Soviet Union's primary interest is perhaps to use Panama's customs, shipping, and commercial facilities for the acquisition of ad hoc technology for Soviet economic development. The efforts that the Soviet Union is making to modernize its infrastructures for the production of goods and services, especially in the agricultural and industrial fields, are well known. Panama could serve as a Caribbean open door that would facilitate the goal of securing access to the dynamic world of Western technological development.

Talk of Soviet interest in Panama's facilities is being backed by facts: It has been reported that a high-level Soviet mission will soon be arriving in Panama to study

the Colon Free Zone, the canal installations, and everything having to do with establishing commercial relations, which promise to be satisfactory. The possibility of a mixed Panamanian delegation composed of government officials and businessmen going to the Soviet Union following the visit by the Soviet mission, to study from a Panamanian point of view the eventuality of commercial relations between the two nations, has not been discarded.

Panama, acting in line with the principle of having diplomatic relations based on respect for self-determination and nonintervention in the domestic affairs of other countries, is expanding its ties with the Eastern European countries that were ruled by Marxist-Leninist dictatorships and are now being transformed into open, democratic, and multiparty societies. In addition to its ties with the Soviet Union, Panama has diplomatic relations with Poland and Yugoslavia and has not yet formalized its relations with Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and others. In Asia, Panama has relations with Nationalist China, but not with the PRC, the giant of the continent, because the PRC requires the breaking of relations with Taiwan as a condition for establishing relations. In the still troubled, but prosperous, Arab world, Panama holds relations only with Libya and the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic. The Foreign Ministry will have to review its relations with the Arab world to open its doors to countries such as Morocco—which has great influence among the North African countries, or Maghreb—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the Arab Emirates, countries that have a very high per capita income and dynamic commerce.

It must be pointed out that the Soviet Union is a signatory of the Neutrality Treaty of the Panama Canal, and that as such it will now cooperate more than ever to maintain the canal as an area free of wars and at the service of world sea transportation.

Official on Final 'Adjustments' to Legal Pact

PA0404160091 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1815 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Panama City, 3 Apr (ACAN-EFE)—Official sources reported today that Panama and the United States have reached an agreement on the controversial treaty that will allow U.S. authorities to investigate money "laundering" operations in the Panamanian banking center, but the date for the signing of the treaty has not yet been established.

Panamanian Deputy Foreign Minister Jose Raul Mulino told ACAN-EFE that "the negotiation process" for the Mutual Legal Assistance Agreement (MLAA) "has ended." Mulino explained that some final "adjustments" in the "wording and translation" of the English and Spanish versions are yet to be made. Thus, he said, neither the contents of the treaty nor the date for its signing have been disclosed.

Leaders of the Panama Banking Association, which comprises most of the 110 banks that operate in Panama, have told ACAN-EFE that they will not comment on the announcement that the negotiations have ended since the government has not reported to them on the final aspects of the agreement. [passage omitted]

Argentina

Vice President Threatened Over Antidrug Fight

PY0404235691 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1548 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Santa Rosa, La Pampa, 4 Apr (NA)—Vice President Eduardo Duhalde today reported that he has been receiving telephone threats for a long time and that "they are surely from drug traffickers who do not want the topic of drugs to be permanently in the spotlight."

He said: "These criminals do not want us to sign anti-drug agreements with other nations and we are constantly on top of [word indistinct]."

He said that he wanted to alert the population to "this very powerful enemy that has a lot of money and corrupts all sectors."

Duhalde said: "People believe that drugs fall from the sky, but they do not understand that everything is perfectly organized." He attributed the threats to the fact that he is permanently struggling [words indistinct]. [passage omitted]

Trade Official To Discuss Kuwait in U.S.

PY0404214491 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0144 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 3 Apr (TELAM)—Alieto Guadagni, under secretary of international economic relations, left today for Washington to study with U.S. officials the process for the reconstruction of Kuwait.

Guadagni will later leave for Europe to join the presidential delegation which will visit Germany. He will then visit London to continue his mission become familiar with the reconstruction of Kuwait.

Guadagni's trip, which will last more than 10 days, seeks to gather as much information as possible on the reconstruction process in order to inform the Argentine businessmen interested in this issue.

The tasks planned for the zone affected by the Persian Gulf war have three stages: emergency operation by the U.S. Army Engineering Corps, planning, and execution.

During his stay in Washington and London, Guadagni will meet with officials of the two governments, with Kuwaiti representatives, and with companies which are already working in the emergency areas.

Guadagni told reporters that the Argentine participation depends on Argentine businessmen, adding that the contribution of the Foreign Ministry is to facilitate their task.

While in Washington, Guadagni will also discuss bilateral issues such as the patents law; agreements on promotion, protection, and guarantees on investments; and the Uruguay Round of the GATT, among other issues.

Cavallo Leaves for IDB Assembly in Japan

PY0504030491 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0235 GMT 5 Apr 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 4 Apr (TELAM)—Shortly before 2330 tonight, Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo left for Japan to attend the 32d annual assembly of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

Cavallo, who departed from Ezeiza International Airport, is scheduled to arrive in the city of Nagoya, Japan, on 6 April.

Menem, Advisers Discuss Debt, Privatization

PY0404220691 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0125 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 4 Apr (TELAM)—During a meeting today chaired by President Carlos Menem, the Argentine foreign debt committee decided to speed up studies of measures designed to solve the foreign debt problem. One of these measures is to promote privatizations.

Alvaro Alsogaray [former presidential economic adviser] disclosed at Government House [words indistinct] that during the meeting Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo referred to the behavior of the domestic economy which is firmly linked to the foreign debt issue because, obviously, what happens in the country affects the country's negotiating position.

Alsogaray said that the purpose of today's meeting was to promote the foreign debt subject without undertaking any commitments for the time being because many internal issues, like the budget, are still being negotiated.

Alsogaray added that it was agreed that the entire process will be accelerated and that short-term efforts will be made to promote privatizations and renegotiate the debt. Economy Minister Cavallo will visit Japan and the FRG, while President Menem will go to the FRG. Another meeting will be held upon their return to access the progress made.

Answering a question, Alsogaray said that he did not think the economic plan had neglected the foreign debt problem, adding that the amount of the debt with commercial banks had simply not been considered. He said that a pause has undoubtedly been taken to see what can be done first and then start negotiations.

Alsogaray said that current economic program allows for transparent handling of the public debt, but that this is not the case with the private sector debts.

Regarding today's meeting, Alsogaray said that he was invited to attend even though he had resigned as presidential economic adviser, adding that he will continue to informally cooperate in analyzing this subject.

The meeting at the president's office lasted for more than two hours. Senator Eduardo Menem; Eduardo Bauza,

secretary general of the presidency; Jorge Matzkin, head of the budget and finance commission of the Chamber of Deputies; Economy Under Secretary Carlos Sanchez; Central Bank Vice Chairman Felipe Murolo; and other Foreign and Economy Ministry authorities also attended the meeting.

Cost of Living Increases 11 Percent in Mar

PY0504012591 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2105 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 3 Apr (TELAM)—The National Institute of Statistics and Census (INDEC) reported this afternoon that the cost of living increased 11 percent in March.

The wholesale price index was 0.4 percent, and the construction cost in the federal capital was 3 percent.

Bolivia

Resolution on U.S. Troops Sent to Executive

PY0404133091 La Paz Radio Fides in Spanish 1100 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] At approximately 0500 this morning the majority in Congress—made up of the MIR [Movement of the Revolutionary Left], ADN [Nationalist Democratic Action], and the PDC [Christian Democratic Party]—approved the entry of U.S. troops into Bolivia to militarize the struggle against drug trafficking.

In the absence of the MNR [Nationalist Revolutionary Movement], the Conscience of the Fatherland, the United Left, and the Free Bolivia Movement, representatives of the Patriotic Agreement approved the following congressional resolution:

In accordance with Item 15 of Article 59 of the National Constitution, it is hereby resolved to authorize the executive branch to allow the entry into the country of U.S. Armed Forces instructors to train two battalions of the Bolivian Armed Forces, to be carried out in accordance with the following schedule:

From 4 April to 15 July 1991, for the training of the Manchego Battalion in Santa Cruz Department; from 2 September to 30 November 1991, for the training of the Jordan Battalion in Beni Department.

This resolution has been submitted to the executive branch for the fulfillment of the appropriate constitutional provisions by ADN Deputy Tito Hoz de Vila.

U.S. Military To Install Base in Cochabamba

PY0404211691 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 27 Mar 91 Second Section p 1

[Text] Cochabamba, 26 Mar—At the request of the Defense Ministry, a U.S. military delegation will install a base in this department to oversee the implementation of Annex 3 which seeks to eradicate the coca leaf plantations.

This report was given to PRESENCIA by Evo Morales Ayma, executive secretary of the Special Federation of Peasant Workers of the Tropics, who said that the report was obtained "confidentially."

According to Morales Ayma, the peasants have learned of the arrival of 60 military instructors, 25 of which are reportedly in the country to train the Army troops that will enter the coca leaf plantation areas.

He said that although there are no indications that the base will be in Chapare, "we do not rule out that possibility once the militarization process begins." He added: "This is very serious, and for this reason we have decided to declare a state of emergency and mobilization. We demand that the president of the Republic show us the constitutional powers that authorize him to order the militarization."

Morales Ayma said that the peasant producers of coca leaves will ask President Paz Zamora to fulfill his preelectoral promise to "get the gringos out of the country" under his slogan "Bolivia for Bolivians."

He added that a clear example of the violence that the presence of military troops in Chapare could unleash is the murder last Friday of Alejandro Velasco, a member of the 15 December union, of the Littoral Federation of Isiboro Secure [not further identified], who was killed by DEA or Umopar [Rural Area Police Patrol Unit] agent. He also cited the detention of five peasants "who will be forced to give information under threats."

Antinarcotics Chief on Military, U.S. Roles

PY0504001391 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 31 Mar 91 p 12

[Text] Division General Elias Gutierrez, commander of the Special Antinarcotics Force [FELCN], asserted 30 March that the Army will not attack coca producers, "but the mafia that produces base paste and cocaine hydrochloride."

In a statement to PRESENCIA, Gen. Gutierrez said that there is no need for the peasants-sector declaration that they will defend themselves against any attack by the forces in charge of repressing drug trafficking.

In his first public statement as commander of the FELCN, Gutierrez said: "The coca producers should feel safe and at ease, and not be influenced by politicians with ideas that only harm Bolivia."

He added that the only purpose of the arrival in Bolivia of U.S. troops is to train and teach the Army "to guarantee safety and defend the national territory, which is constantly threatened by drug trafficking."

Gen. Gutierrez also mentioned the tasks carried out by the civic action organizations in areas where the production centers are very distant from the consumption centers. The FELCN commander added: "We will strongly support the alternative development plan implemented by the government."

Gen. Gutierrez said that the Bolivian Army will work in the areas where drug traffickers are currently operating. That is, in Beni and Santa Cruz, where the Army will give logistics and intelligence support to the FELCN.

These details have been jointly discussed with the leadership of the Bolivian Armed Forces.

Moreover, tighter control on the border and specific areas will be implemented to prevent the entry of chemical precursors used to produce cocaine and to prevent the exit of cocaine to intermediary and consumer countries.

Gen. Gutierrez said that support tasks will be similar to those performed by the Air Force troops or "Red Devils," and the Navy troops or "Blue Devils."

When asked whether he had a list of the most outstanding drug traffickers operating in Bolivia, Gutierrez said that he did but that for obvious reasons he could not mention their names.

The FELCN commander warned that those Army members who become involved with drug trafficking will be severely punished according to the military and national law.

Gen. Gutierrez said that there are cases of Army members who got involved with drug trafficking and were immediately dismissed or punished by the court.

Gutierrez disclosed that the possibility of forming a military-police high command is being assessed. This organization would be in charge of planning and coordinating the struggle against drug trafficking.

Asked whether the drug traffickers who have been arrested will be held in barracks or ordinary prisons, Gutierrez said that they will be brought before special courts as established by Law No. 1008.

Eid Franco Notes 'Balance' in U.S. Relations

PY0404165891 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 1 Apr 91 p 1

[Text] (ANF) [Fides News Agency]—Ruling Patriotic Agreement leader Oscar Eid Franco has said that relations between Bolivia and the United States have reached a point of balance on the basis of reciprocal interests. "Our relations with the great northern country are among the most complex and sensitive," he said.

He explained that after the period of undeniable tension that prevailed in the past few weeks, "a position of healthy respect has been established to the benefit of the interests of both nations." He added that the appropriate atmosphere for making progress in the various fields of bilateral relations now exists.

Eid Franco said Bolivian-U.S. relations reach beyond the conditions that reportedly marked government policy after the designation of Colonel Faustino Rico Toro as commander of the Special Antinarcotics Force (FELCN).

He noted that the decision to put more emphasis on the alternative development strategy rather than on interdiction—which became a supplementary factor—has produced healthy equilibrium.

He reported that, at the upcoming special congressional session, "only the presence of foreign advisers for the Armed Forces will be submitted for approval, because the alternative development policy will prevail."

Peasant Group Issues Warning to Government

PY0504033891 La Paz Radio Fides Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Following 1 April consultations with the departmental and regional federations, the executive committee of the General Union Confederation of Peasant Workers of Bolivia [CSUTCB] resolves:

1. To warn the government, the National Congress, and especially the Patriotic Agreement bloc, that if they approve the militarization of the coca production zones and authorize the arrival of U.S. military advisers, they will be held responsible for the possible outbreak of violence, bloodshed, and mourning in the country.

2. To reinforce the preparation and organization of a blockade of national roads to confront the militarization process. The CSUTCB executive committee has been charged with establishing the appropriate date for these actions.

Signed: Mario Flores, executive secretary, and Pastor Velazquez, organization secretary.

Coca Growers Demand Constitutional Compliance

PY0504002491 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 25 Mar 91 Second Section p 1

[Text] Cochabamba, 24 Mar (PRESENCIA)—Local coca leaf growers have demanded that the Bolivian Armed Forces "comply with" the terms of the Constitution and take actions to control the Bolivian borders.

In a communique, the peasants state that while the Armed Forces are preparing to militarize the coca producing areas, neighboring countries like Brazil, Chile, and Peru "are invading Bolivian territory." The communique explains that the massive entry of Brazilian, Chilean, and Peruvian citizens, who invade the border area and indiscriminately exploit the natural resources, has been repeatedly reported to all sectors.

The communique says that Brazilians and Chileans "are carrying off the entire gold reserves," and that "they have gone far into the Bolivian territory," adding that Peruvian guerrillas have reportedly established a base of operations in Bolivian territory.

The peasants charge that the military troops are not interested in fighting drug traffickers, merely eradicating the coca leaf crops for which reason the Armed Forces are being asked "not to yield to the economic blackmail of the U.S. Government."

The peasants denounce "the attempt to manipulate Bolivian military men into participating in the militarization of the coca-producing areas as a way to solve the Armed Forces critical economic situation. This action could provoke unpredictable consequences."

They believe that the decision to accept the so-called militarization "would mean placing the Bolivian Armed Forces under the control of the Pentagon." The responsibility for this would rest on the ruling parties which are acting unpatriotically.

The peasants reiterate that development "is the only real and effective way" to fight drug trafficking because the coca leaf crop is a natural resource that must be used to help Bolivians overcome their poverty, and consequently "we must not undersell it."

Chile

Coverage of Guzman's Funeral Procession, Burial

PY0404232291

[Editorial Report] Santiago Television Nacional de Chile in Spanish at 1913 GMT carries live coverage of the funeral procession of Independent Democratic Union (UDI) Senator Jaime Guzman from the General Cemetery (Cemeterio General) in Santiago.

The announcer says that Senate President Gabriel Valdes; Juan de Dios Vial Larrain, rector of the University of Chile; Hernan Larrain, dean of the Santa Maria University; UDI President Julio Dittborn; Senator Sergio Fernandez, who was designated senator by former President Pinochet; and UDI Senator Eugenio Cantuarias will deliver speeches.

At 1920 GMT, as the coffin is unloaded, and the speech by Cantuarias begins, the announcer says that they are returning to normal programming and that coverage will be resumed later.

At 1958 GMT, the station resumes live coverage from the General Cemetery. Juan de Dios Vial Larrain is shown delivering a eulogy on Guzman's virtues. Station returns to normal programming after only two minutes.

At 2021 GMT, the station resumes live coverage from the General Cemetery for nine minutes showing UDI Chairman Dittborn ending his eulogy on Guzman's role in the history of Chile, his support of Pinochet's redeeming task, his founding of the UDI, and his absolute faithfulness toward the principles that guided his life. The reporter then announces that the ceremony is about to end.

Video shows pan shots of the crowd gathered at the cemetery main gate and the coffin being carried by pall bearers who enter the cemetery in a procession to strains of the national anthem, which is sung by Guzman's supporters. As the procession enters the cemetery the crowd shouts "Viva Chile, Viva Pinochet." The reporter then announces that the station is resuming its normal programming.

At 2113 GMT, the station resumes live coverage from the General Cemetery for two minutes. The reporter announces that Guzman's supporters are now allowed to visit his tomb. The station then runs a video clip showing the procession with the coffin entering Guzman's mother's mausoleum. Coverage finally ends at 2115 GMT when the announcer reports that the station is resuming its normal programming and that the next newscast will be the 2000 newscast.

Object Thrown at Aylwin's Car

PY0504005891 Santiago Radio Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] There was strong police protection throughout the funeral procession of late Senator Jaime Guzman.

During the procession the Carabineros acted only once. The incident occurred on the corner of Caming and Romero Streets just a few seconds after the car carrying President Patricio Aylwin had passed. An unidentified individual threw an object at the car but failed to hit it. The police acted quickly and arrested the individual who is about 25 years of age, strong, with curly hair, and wearing sports clothes.

The funeral procession, apart from this incident, was calm, orderly, and emotional.

Senator Valdes Praises Guzman

PY0504034891 Santiago Radio Cooperativa Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Senate President Gabriel Valdes said today that late Senator Jaime Guzman is a martyr to the cause that unites Chileans beyond religious differences, beyond cultures. Valdes added that Guzman was a martyr to a cause where differences are decided through ideas competing with adversaries, not with enemies. Gabriel Valdes bid Guzman farewell on behalf of the Senate in the garden of the General Cemetery. His speech was interrupted by the whistling of some overly excited mourners. Valdes, however, overcame the situation stressing that few people understood, as Senator Jaime Guzman did even when force seemed to prevail, that all is useless when it is done through violence. Later Valdes said:

[Begin Valdes recording] On behalf of the Senate I express here all our condolences and deep solidarity with his mother—an example of courage—his sisters, [whistling, shouts heard in background] other relatives, his friends, his disciples, his party, and all Chileans who act in good faith and who are afflicted by this great loss that affects us all. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Continuing Fallout From Guzman Murder Reported

Errazuriz Wanted in UDI

PY0504020891 Santiago Radio Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Something very unusual occurred at the end of Senator Jaime Guzman's funeral: Hundreds of UDI [Independent Democratic Union] supporters loudly demanded that former presidential candidate Francisco Javier Errazuriz become the UDI's presidential candidate. [crowd shouts: "Join UDI, join UDI."]

Considering the moment and the place, the request was very unusual. Therefore, we approached Errazuriz to ask him about the meaning of the spontaneous shouts:

[Begin Errazuriz recording] This represents the feelings of many humble, modest persons who know how to express their ideas. These people believe that I might be a good UDI leader and that I might express the party's philosophy well. However, I am a centrist, and I believe that the UDI will also join the centrist factions. This is why I have told them that we should all unite in the centrist factions. I am sure that by so doing we will all help build a better Chile. If we all unite and put an end to divisions, we will be better off because we have more reasons to unite than to split. This is the most important thing: not to look for reasons to split, to become estranged, and not to look back into the past, as the current government has done in the belief that by looking into the past one can govern. This is not so. One can only govern by looking into the future and building for tomorrow, for a common future. This is what I believe we must do. [end recording]

We pointed out that this might change the national political scene entirely. To that Errazuriz answered that the political scene changes with the same speed as politics. Therefore, I am not very concerned about that, he said.

Corvalan Comments on Murder

PY0304231091 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] Communist leader Luis Corvalan has deemed unfair the statement by President Patricio Aylwin about his party, adding that the criticism prompted by his declarations published last Sunday is equally unfair. Corvalan pointed out that he recommended those who posses arms to, quote, keep them in store just in case, and suggested that those who persist in carrying out violent actions during the democratic process should abandon that path, unquote.

[Begin recording] [Corvalan] Much has been said in an attempt to make the party propose terrorism. The truth is that the party condemns terrorism, and stands for democracy, for the success of the Aylwin government in the transition to democracy. It always has, and the president was unfair when he said during this morning's press conference that the leaders of the Communist Party have assured him that they are trying to join the democratic process. We are not about to join democracy; we are part of democracy, and we have always been.

When I used the expression just in case, it should be understood that I said it in the context of an interview that was intended to stress the need to take bold steps down the road of democracy. The youngsters who possess arms should not use them under the current conditions of democratic government, but they should keep their powder dry.

[Reporter] Does that mean that the weapons could be used eventually?

[Corvalan] And if there is a coup tomorrow? If those who threatened with brilliant [word indistinct]....

[Reporter, interrupting] Do you dismiss the possibility that these people who used arms to kill Jaime Guzman yesterday are the same people you say should keep their powder dry?

[Corvalan] No, no, no. The killers of Jaime Guzman are not the same people. That is some of the dust raised by the Rettig report to place a pall of impunity over the crimes, the violations of human rights that have been committed.

[Reporter] How would you classify those who killed Jaime Guzman?

[Corvalan] I believe they are assassins, assassins. It was an assassination. [end recording]

Leftists Most Likely Suspects

PY0404123491 Madrid EFE in English 0324 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Santiago, April 3 (EFE)—Chilean Interior Undersecretary Belisario Velasco said Wednesday [3 April] that two extreme leftist groups were being investigated as the most likely suspects in the murder of a prominent right-wing senator earlier this week.

Velasco said there were clues to indicate that either the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR) or the Lautaro Youth Movement, both Marxist, is responsible for the killing of Senator Jaime Guzman.

The FPMR has denied responsibility for the slaying and said a caller who told media the group had carried out the attack did not represent the FPMR.

Guzman, a top adviser to former military ruler Gen. Augusto Pinochet, was shot in the chest Monday at the Catholic University of Santiago, where he was a professor.

Several officials, including President Patricio Aylwin, have pointed to the extreme left as responsible for the murder. Some press reports have speculated that Guzman's death could be related to a dispute with the former chief of secret police under Pinochet, retired General Manuel Contreras.

Krauss Did Submit Resignation

PY0504023691 Santiago Radio Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Interior Minister Enrique Krauss has confirmed that on the night of 1 April he tendered his resignation to President Aylwin after he learned of the attack during which Senator Jaime Guzman was killed.

He said he tendered his resignation a few minutes before the beginning of the Security Committee meeting at La Moneda. Krauss added that President Aylwin rejected his resignation and told him to continue working as interior minister and head of the cabinet.

Bomb Explodes at Navy Headquarters; No Casualties

PY0404124891 Santiago Radio Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] According to a police report, a medium-sized bomb exploded last night behind the Navy headquarters. The explosion did not cause any casualties.

The explosion affected the naval facility near Sotomayor Park in Valparaiso. The attack took place just 48 hours after a subversive commando murdered Senator Jaime Guzman, leader of the Independent Democratic Union, a close aide in the government of General Augusto Pinochet.

The headquarters was cordoned off by naval personnel after the explosion while Carabineros began an investigation to determine the people responsible for the attack.

No organization has claimed responsibility for the bombing, which was carried out a few blocks from the Senate, where a secret meeting was held last night to establish a policy to eradicate violence and terrorism.

According to the police, the bomb may have been thrown from a hill. Several operations were carried out after the attack but there are no reports of arrests.

Police Arrest Suspect in Double Murder Case

PY0504004191 Santiago Radio Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] A student who studies photography in Santiago but who does temporary work picking fruit in the Sixth Region has been arrested by the police for his alleged participation in the murder of Dr. Carlos Perez and his wife on 3 March in Rancagua.

Police sources also indicated that the student's possible participation in the murder of Senator Jaime Guzman Errazuriz is being investigated. The student has been identified as Hugo Eugenio Cerda Bravo, 23. He was arrested without any resistence in his house in Rancagua.

The police raided his house and found an undisclosed quantity of weapons, ammunition, explosives, subversive material, and scarfs of the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front. His arrest is part of the investigation ordered by Prosecutor Sonia Araneda who is in charge of the murder case. The suspect, who is married and has one child, was held under arrest for two years but then released by presidential pardon.

Soviet Official Calls For More Trade Cooperation

PY0404023091 Santiago Radio Cooperativa Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 1 Apr 91

[Text] Vladimir Burmistrov, deputy minister of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, has said that Chile and the Soviet Union must change their traditional approach to trade and begin a new stage in their economic exchange. The Soviet official is participating in the first meeting between Chilean and Soviet businessmen at a Santiago Hotel. The event will conclude on 5 April. According to Burmistrov, trade between Chile and the Soviet Union must be based on cooperation, investment, the creation of mixed enterprises, and active industrial cooperation.

[Begin Burmistrov recording with passage-by-passage translation into Spanish] We are considering other forms of nontraditional trade to improve our exchange. We are thinking of a more complex economic and productive cooperation. We think this cooperation should be based on a creative combination of state interests and a larger participation of Soviet firms in foreign markets. We expect to strengthen relations between medium and small firms. [end recording]

The Soviet official said that even though his country has yet to solve problems of customs restrictions and cultural and geographic differences, there are broad possibilities for exchange in the areas of food, machine manufacturing, clothing, technical assistance, and heavy industry. At present Chilean-Soviet trade is almost nonexistent. The decline was prompted by the breaking of diplomatic relations between the two governments in 1973.

Edmundo Vargas Views Border Issue With Argentina

PY0304234291 Santiago Radio Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] Acting Foreign Minister Edmundo Vargas has said that the government will seek a consensus over the border problem with Argentina in the Laguna del Desierto, in the 11th Region.

Vargas explained that there have been no incidents in that region and that no Chileans have been harassed. He said that both governments are willing to reach an agreement over the border markers in the region. He added that the Chilean and Argentine border commissions are meeting to find the best possible solution based on the agreement reached by Chilean President Patricio Aylwin and Argentine President Carlos Menem last August.

Vargas said that the current problem is related to a disagreement about the exact dividing line in that region but that there is a will to talk and to negotiate, and that this is being done. He added that on this issue the government position is clear in defending our rights. He said that the policy that will be implemented in this case will be a policy of consensus.

[Begin Vargas recording] The Chilean policy on this border issue will always be a policy of consensus. We will not, however, disclose details of the negotiations due to the delicate nature of the issue. We cannot give full details to the people now. At the appropriate time this democratic government will do it, but until then we will continue to talk with responsible leaders of the country, and the opposition, and congressional leaders. We will also contact members of the Armed Forces. I discussed this issue a few months ago with the national security committee, of which I am a member. We are in a process of negotiations. We want Chile to show on this issue, as it has shown on other issues, a united position. [end recording]

Vargas recalled that out of the 24 border problems with Argentina, 22 have already been solved. Therefore, there are only two border problems pending and one of them involves Laguna del Desierto. He said that this is a very serious issue which cannot lead to any disagreements among Chileans and this is why a national consensus is needed.

Ecuador

Teachers Receive Concessions, Suspend Strike

PA0304183091 Paris AFP in Spanish 0150 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] Quito, 2 Apr (AFP)—Ecuadoran teachers have decided to suspend their 37-day-old strike in the wake of an announcement by Finance Minister Pablo Better that the value added tax would be raised to finance increased seniority benefits for teachers.

Better, who appeared before the Congress on Tuesday to explain the steps being taken to streamline public expenditures, described the concession made to the teachers as a sacrifice in order to have classes in public schools return to normal.

Education Minister Alfredo Vera estimated that granting benefits based on the number of years worked rather than on basic wages will cost the government an additional 17 billion sucres ($16.8 million).

Juan Jose Castello, president of the National Union of Teachers, announced that he will schedule a meeting of the Executive Committee, followed by provincial assemblies, to end the strike. Lifting the strike requires a resolution by a majority of the teachers, because they were also demanding revocation of several recently adopted agreements. These agreements, implemented by Vera, "are an attack on the rights acquired by the teachers," Castello said.

Vera will face impeachment in an upcoming special session of the Congress to be held in May.

Colombian UP Leader Requests Political Asylum

PA0504052291 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0038 GMT 5 Apr 91

[Text] Quito, 4 Apr (EFE)—Oscar Duenas, vice president of the Colombian leftist Patriotic Union (UP) movement, requested political asylum from the Ecuadoran Government in Quito today.

Duenas said at a news conference in the Ecuadoran Parliament that his life was threatened in Colombia and that he wanted to remain in Ecuador until the danger was over.

The politician, who was a candidate to the Colombian Constituent Assembly, explained that he left Colombia a few days ago because he found out that "paramilitary bands" were preparing to attack him.

Duenas said the UP had struggled for the pacification of Colombia and requested that President Cesar Gaviria's government and the guerrillas hold a dialogue to attain peace.

Likewise, he asked President Gaviria to form a special commission to investigate the assassinations of 1,00 UP members.

Oscar Duenas was appointed UP president after presidential candidate Bernardo Jaramillo was killed in 1990. Until he fled to Ecuador, Duenas was the law school dean at the Inca University in Bogota.

Paraguay

Customs Office Releases Foreign Periodicals

PY0404142091 Asuncion NOTICIAS in Spanish 4 Apr 91 p 12

[Excerpt] The customs office at Silvio Pettirossi Airport has reported that it is handing over the foreign periodicals it has been holding despite the fact that distributors refuse to pay the 3-percent customs duty.

According to the distributors, after two days of holding the periodicals the customs office has decided to release them to dealers who sign a commitment to pay the duty within 48 hours.

The customs authorities at the airport have indicated that they never refused to hand over the foreign periodicals, although no Brazilian or Argentine periodicals circulated on 1 and 2 April. [passage omitted]

Governing Party Meeting Becomes 'Big Brawl'

PY0404222891 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 4 Apr 91 p 10

[Excerpt] What was to have been a meeting of the executive board of the ANR [National Republican Association—Colorado Party] on 3 April turned into a big brawl. Youth sectors of the Autonomous and Renewal factions went for each other in a brawl that involved kicking, punching, and brawling amidst mutual accusations of "henchmen" [preceding word given in Guarani], "renegade," and "corrupt."

Everything began when [ANR Deputy] Carlos Galeano Perrone requested "the reorganization of the Youth Affairs Commission" (which is presided over by [Education Minister Angel Roberto] Seifart) "because the main role of the Colorado youth has been superseded, it was not formed for democracy. There are no rules or regulations to register names, there are not even any electoral rolls at the youth level. This is why we are asking for the replacement of the board members in view of their incapability, their negligence, and their bad faith." This is the accusation that was made.

Alberto Alderete of the Renewal Faction asked permission to answer the accusation in the same tone of voice as that used by Galeano but he was not given permission, and the same happened with [Deputies] Cristina Munoz and Artemio Castillo, while supporters of [Luis Maria] Argana [interim president of the Colorado Party] were making an infernal noise. At the same time Argana asked the "identity" of one of youths who, according to Argana's charges, "was in the middle of the melee and who happens to be a policeman." Because he did not obtain this information, and after an exchange of ideas about the turbulent nature of the meeting, Argana closed with the accusation that "this is take-over by the police."

From that point on the scene became a real boxing ring, where according to Seifart's supporters, "the 40 karate experts contracted by the Autonomous Faction" went to work.

When Deputy Castillo was expressing a few "gems" against Argana's behavior, one of the latter's sons (Chachi) pretended to embrace the Deputy, and managed to punch him several times. The son of the former foreign minister later said that "it was only in self defense, nothing else, as anyone would do." [passage omitted]

Venezuela

Thousands of Doctors Begin 24-Hour Strike

PA0504035591 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0037 GMT 5 Apr 91

[Text] Caracas, 4 Apr (NOTIMEX)—More than 25,000 doctors of the Venezuelan health system staged a nationwide strike today to protest the shortages of medical supplies and equipment, as well as a draft bill on the privatization of national health care.

Although the government of President Carlos Andres has not officially announced the privatization of the social security system; it is widely known that the privatization of the administration of health services is being considered.

The 24-hour strike was declared against the backdrop of demonstrations before the National Congress. Moreover, doctors and paramedics held meetings at hospitals and clinics in an effort to determine strategy to defend the national health system.

Lolita Aniyar, president of the Senate Health Committee, noted that the privatization of the health sector might lead to corruption and "the creation of ghost companies in charge of administering hospitals."

The health sector has a $1-million budget for this year. This amount, however, is inadequate for improving the hospital infrastructure or for any additional purchases of medical equipment.

During the past two years, doctors have complained about the lack of supplies, including the most elementary items, such as gauze, alcohol, and antibiotics. Much of the equipment is unserviceable due to the lack of proper maintenance. There is also overcrowding in hospitals, often as many as three persons to have to share one bed, particularly in the maternity ward.

Police Use Tear Gas To Control Student Riots

PA0504034191 Caracas Venezolana de Television Canal 8 in Spanish 0030 GMT 5 Apr 91

[Recorded passages in quotation marks]

[Excerpts] Calm has been restored in the streets of Caracas following today's riots at the Teaching University Institute and the Central University of Venezuela.

Tear gas was used when several students took over four public transportation buses, but the buses were quickly recovered by the police. There was some confusion when some shots were fired and the policemen began throwing tear gas in different directions. The students and professors of the Teaching University Institute explained what happened.

[Unidentified student] "We were confronted with a pretty bad situation even before Holy Week. As you can see, we are surrounded by the police. No student is

allowed to walk near the area, as he is asked for his personal identification card as well as his student identification card. In other words, we are surrounded by the police.

This morning, both students and professors were about to hold a peaceful march to protest our internal and national problems. The police arrived at the site of the march and quickly repressed it. Some of our fellow students were affected by the tear gas, and we were not allowed to enter the campus. We were planning to march on this avenue merely to distribute fliers protesting the situation.

The director decided to suspend all activities. Therefore, we want to denounce this action which we feel is irresponsible toward the institution and the national situation. It is impossible that a person having so much importance and hierarchy cannot do anything, and far from doing anything positive, he goes against the student leadership." [passage omitted]

The violence taking place in recent hours in several cities of the country was a topic of discussion on the agenda of today's Council of Ministers held at the Miraflores Palace. The executive branch and the Armed Forces deplored these actions and said they are not going to allow this type of situation to continue in the country.

The first one to make any statements at Miraflores Palace was Caracas Governor Virgilio Avila Divas, who urged the students not to let themselves be manipulated by unscrupulous persons and agitators, such as the hooded individuals. [passage omitted]

Defense Minister Vice Admiral Hector Jurado Toro also deplored the events and said he was waiting for the final results of the investigations. He said that the Armed Forces will not allow the hooded individuals to act freely and that the university authorities will be responsible for any more strict and severe actions that the state security corps might have to carry out in the future to prevent the agitators from continuing their actions.

[Jurado Toro] "We deeply regret this permanent interruption of classes, these strikes, the wounded persons, and the confrontations. We are studying these cases to see how we can handle these problems.

[Reporter] "Is there any possibility that the university campus will be raided?

[Jurado Toro] "That has not been considered at any time. You know very well that we have not conducted any raids."

The defense minister added that if any governor feels he needs for the National Guard to go into action, it will cooperate in every way possible to make order prevail.

The Interior Affairs Ministry issued a communique ratifying the National Government's decision to guarantee peace and tranquillity for the people. The communique said there is no justification for this violence. The communique reiterates to the students that the reduced transportation rates are still in effect, and the resources are guaranteed in the national budget.

[Deputy Interior Minister] "The national government reiterates its stand of guaranteeing public order throughout the nation and preventing the takeover of public installations and any damage to private property.

Likewise, we reiterate that all citizens have a right to voice their opinions, as guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic. However, this right has nothing to do with the use of violence, the destruction of public services, and the suspension of educational activities that our youth are demanding and need so much."

* Minister Duran on CAP, AD, Economic Policy

91SM0235A Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish First Section 4 Mar 91 p 12

[Interview with Minister of the Secretariat of the Presidency Armando Duran by Ricardo Escalante; place and date not given; "We Have Very Little Public Spending"]

[Text] Armando Duran disagrees with people in Venezuela who talk about our excessive public spending. "The problem is precisely the opposite: our very limited public spending."

Duran is one of the men who has been closest to President Perez recently. He was head of the media unit during the election campaign, then minister-chairman of Corpoturismo [Corporation for National Tourism], and now he is minister of the secretariat of the presidency.

He is a political commentator now on leave because of his government position, but today he speaks his mind about certain aspects of the administration, the party, and politics in general.

Among other things, he says that the executive cannot lay off half a million government employees; it must take into account the current crisis and the private sector's inability to absorb these people.

In his opinion, the Venezuelan people view the administration's performance during this period positively, and he predicts that at the end of his term, CAP [President Carlos Andres Perez] will be replaced in office by another AD [Democratic Action] administration.

Duran also talks of his stay at the Ministry of Information and Tourism during the previous administration, a post which he describes as thankless and difficult.

AD and Privatization

[Escalante] AD has expressed an interest in controlling privatization programs, and the opposition has viewed this as an interest in introducing partisan politics in a way that is unsuitable for Venezuela. What does the government think?

[Duran] Let there be no mistake about this. Every administration is political. Every government action is political. One party wins the elections, and a party leader becomes president.

AD's position on privatization needs to be explained by the party's spokespersons, but I understand it this way: AD wants to know what is being done and how, and to see how it can offer ideas, cooperation, and assistance so that things will improve, so that the process can be accelerated.

A highly negative attitude is being generated about whatever is political. I would say that AD's interest in being involved in privatization manifests the party's desire to contribute to a process that is essential for the nation's development. A party with historic responsibility cannot remain on the sidelines.

Moreover, I must make it clear that it is not a question of supervising or overseeing, but rather of participating, of contributing ideas, of exercising a right, and of fulfilling an obligation, as the party in office.

Privatization Under Way

[Escalante] The opposition claims that the government has no real interest in privatizing major companies....

[Duran] That is not true. The processes corresponding to CANTV [National Telephone Company of Venezuela] and VIASA [Venezuelan National Airways] are moving ahead. A decision has been made about the CANTV lease, with the option to purchase 30 percent of the company. There is already a complete program for VIASA.

The Italo and Republica banks are also in the process of being privatized now. The Italo Bank auction or sale will take place in the middle of this month. Nobody thought that the state would manage to get a proposal of 5 billion bolivars for the CANTV cellular telephone band.

Privatization involves a series of complex measures, studies, and preparations. All this cannot be done overnight.

[Escalante] Will SIDOR [Orinoco Iron and Steelworks] be privatized?

[Duran] No. That is not planned. The privatization of basic industries is not being considered. In recent years major investments have been made in those companies. Both national and foreign capital investments are now being allowed in aluminum projects, but without trying to privatize Venalum [Aluminum Company of Venezuela, Inc.] or Alcasa [Caroni Aluminum, Inc.]. In the next few days we will be discussing the aluminum megaprojects, for the purpose of selecting the companies that will be involved. This will entail investments of over $3 billion.

Foreign Investments Increasing

[Escalante] Critics of the government claim that until now there has not been any real increase in foreign investment....

[Duran] Of course there has. Many investments have been planned and others are now being carried out. In the petrochemical sector alone, investments of over $3 billion will be made in 1991 near Puerto La Cruz, in Jose, with Swedish, French, Italian, and Japanese participation. Some programs are also being carried out in aluminum.

An investment of over $4 billion is being considered in the natural gas exploration project in Paria, with the "Cristobal Colon" [Christopher Columbus] project, in which Exxon, Shell and Mitsubishi will be involved. In awarding the license for cellular telephone service, the state made 5 billion bolivars, and South Bell is now ready to invest.

AD-Government Relations

[Escalante] Some AD members have reservations, and think that the party does not participate decisively in this administration....

[Duran] In addition to the president, the ministers of the interior, foreign affairs, secretariat of the presidency, and energy and mines are AD members. These people are not figureheads. They are key and decisive ministers. Of course, there are also independents in the cabinet, but all Venezuelan administrations have had them.

[Escalante] Yes. But they are calling for more participation in key posts.

[Duran] Well, as far as I know, the party has not raised that issue at all.

[Escalante] Humberto Celli and some other leaders are complaining because the party is not being regularly consulted and because they have no direct involvement in preparing the executive's policies. Why is that happening?

[Duran] We have ongoing discussions. Of course, there are circumstances in which opinions differ, in which there is no unanimity on an issue, and then stories leak out about conflicts. Only in dictatorships are opinions always unanimous. It is a characteristic of democracies to have full discussions, with different viewponts being aired until agreement is more or less reached.

[Escalante] But in AD there is always dissidence in its relations with the government.

[Duran] No, no. Sometimes people are not totally in agreement with a decision or on some issue. If there were really dissidence, the government could not have gotten any law passed in Congress; and everybody knows that AD has fully and absolutely backed the administration's bills. There has been no bill which AD has not supported.

That is the best demonstration of the existence of agreement between the party and the administration, as a result of the ongoing and continuing discussions.

[Escalante] Then where are the problems?

[Duran] There are no problems. There is continuous and ongoing communication between the administration and the party. I repeat, there may be divergent opinions on an issue, but in the discussions understanding is sought and agreement is reached.

[Escalante] Pedro Paris Montesinos has also said that communications mechanisms between the party and the administration are lacking, that CAP-CEN [National Executive Committee] meetings are held very sporadically. You do not agree with such criticisms?

[Duran] Every Monday at 0700 the working committee meets in La Casona. There they discuss all the major issues relating to the nation, the administration and the party. At times they bring in other party leaders or ministers. A meeting is also held in Miraflores with AD's parliamentary group; but of course, nothing is perfect.

There are ways of communicating, but they can and should be improved. The important thing is the desire to improve.

There Is Very Little Public Spending

[Escalante] Gonzalo Barrios questions waste and excessive government spending.... He thinks that at this time little progress has been made with austerity policies....

[Duran] In the United States per capita public spending is five times per capita public spending in Venezuela. That means that here we spend a fifth per capita of what the United States spends. So the problem in Venezuela is not our public spending, but rather that we have too litte public spending, and therefore, the hospitals, Inos [National Institute of Sanitation Works], CANTV, the schools, etc., all have problems.

For many years no major investments have been made in Inos, and the same thing has happened in other state organizations and agencies.

[Escalante] But a good part of public spending is used up in bureaucracy and is wasted on many things.

[Duran] We do not need to go into details. What we have to do is realize that the bureaucratic apparatus has grown. That is not public spending, and that is why we have to distinguish between public spending and bureaucracy.

Bureacracy exists in Venezuela because our fundamental source of wealth is oil, and the state somehow has to distribute the petroleum sector's profits among the Venezuelan people.

[Escalante] I do not know the exact figure, but let us assume that over 500,000 Venezuelan citizens work for the government. Now, I wonder if in the midst of a crisis like the present one the state could get rid of 200,000, 300,000 or half a million of its employees, when the private sector still does not have a sufficient volume of job opportunities to absorb the people who would be laid off?

[Duran] Some day it will be possible to reduce the bureaucracy, but for now what we are doing is cutting personnel costs by 10 percent.

[Escalante] Are personnel levels being cut by 10 percent?

[Duran] No. This does not imply a 10 percent cut in personnel, but rather a 10 percent cutback in spending. The personnel reduction may be 1 or 1.5 percent. The major items to be cut are things like per diem costs, travel expenses, a number of costs that are generated around a bureaucratic apparatus. They can be reduced without affecting the income of the Venezuelans who work for the government.

[Escalante] How many bodyguards do you have?

[Duran] I have a driver and one escort. These people work on a schedule of of 24 hours out of 48, which means three shifts, and so there is a total of six persons. It is assumed that the minister of the secretariat of the presidency needs a driver and an escort on call 24 hours a day, because it is not known when he will have to go somewhere.

Loss of Popularity and the Great Turning Point

[Escalante] Is the administration concerned about its loss of popularity?

[Duran] Nobody likes to lose popularity, but no one in his right mind can base his government on popularity.

This is a serious government and its goal is to carry out an economic and social policy enabling Venezuela to reach its great turning point in five years. If that is the price the administration has to pay to achieve this turning point, to give the nation a solid foundation for development, well, that is too bad. But a leader's responsibility has to be based on what is best for the nation, and not on what is best for himself in terms of popularity.

[Escalante] But in any event, popularity is important, and it has been significantly eroded during this administration.

[Duran] No. I do not believe there is such great erosion, quite the contrary. The polls show that the opinion of the Venezuelan citizens on the government's performance is positive. When people are asked to evaluate this performance, the total of those who respond very good and good is higher than the number of people who think the opposite. But of course, the people must feel dissatisfied. That is one thing, and it is something else for them to lay the blame on the government.

Thankless Ministry of Information

[Escalante] Do you think that CAP will be succeeded by another AD administration in 1994?

[Duran] Yes, but it will be CAP who will select the candidate.

[Escalante] Who is your nominee?

[Duran] I do not have one in mind.

[Escalante] Will you play a role in AD's internal election campaign?

[Duran] No. I am a minister.

[Escalante] Do you like being the minister of the secretariat of the presidency better than being minister of information?

[Duran] The post of minister of information is one of the most thankless in any democratic government. Goebbels had it very easy. With a totalitarian regime and an implacable police system, you do not have to be anything special to be successful with propaganda, but now, with the technological development of communications, we see how information works. In an absolutely and fully democratic system, with complete freedom of the press, the government can only hope to be one more voice in the broad concert of opinions.

[Escalante] Does that explain the government's information failings?

[Duran] It explains the difficulties any democratic government faces in terms of information. Some people always compare a minister of information with Goebbels, who dominated German public opinion, but he did not do so because he was more briliant than any of the ministers of information we have had in Venezuela, but instead because he had very different mechanisms than what is available to a minister of information in a democracy.

[Escalante] You were minister of information in the previous administration. Which of the two information policies is better: the one in the previous administration or the present administration's policy?

[Duran] They are the same. I was minister of information for a very short time. Ministers of information do not last very long because more communication is always expected. That is the problem.

[Escalante] Did you distance yourself from Lusinchi when you left the ministry?

[Duran] No.

[Escalante] That is what people said....

[Duran] No. Shortly afterwards I became minister in Punta del Este.

French Guiana

European Rocket Ariane Successfully Launched

PA0504002291 Paris AFP in Spanish 2344 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Kourou, French Guiana, 4 Apr (AFP)—European space rocket Ariane No. 43 was launched on Thursday, 4 April, from the Kourou Space Center in French Guiana at 2333 GMT. The rocket's mission is to launch a Canadian radio and telecommunications satellite.

Guyana

Prime Minister Price, Observer Team Arrive

FL0404123591 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Belize Prime Minister George Price and his six-member observer team has arrived in Guyana. That team will assess the problems of the current voter registration for elections in Guyana to be held later this year.

On his way to the Guyanese capital, Mr. Price held talks with Trinidadian Foreign Minister Sahadeo Basdeo. The Belizean leader says future meetings will take place with President Desmond Hoyte, opposition leaders, and members of the election commission.

Team Has 'Open Mind'

FL0404194091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1725 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, April 4, CANA—An observer group, led by Belize Prime Minister George Price, arrived in Guyana Wednesday to look at preparations for forthcoming general elections, particularly a current registration exercise on which the voters list will be based.

The seven-member team was sent here by the U.S.-based Carter Centre, headed by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter who has been invited to observe the poll expected later this year.

Price is a vice-chairman of the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government which is affiliated to the centre. He told reporters the team had come to Guyana with an open mind and was impartial "with regard to the parties and candidates of Guyana, but committed to a free and fair and transparent electoral process."

Price was expected to meet President Desmond Hoyte, other government ofificials, leaders of opposition parties, the chairman and members of the elections commission, the commissioner of national registration, and others.

The mission follows repeated complaints by opposition groups about the electoral process which they said was slanted in favour of the ruling People's National Congress (PNC).

Dr. Robert Pastor, executive secretary of the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government, said there was substantial international interest in the Guyana elections. He told reporters that prior to the team's arrival, wide-ranging consultations and discussions had taken place among the council, Trinidad and Tobago External Affairs Minister Dr. Sahadeo Basdeo, the Governments of Venezuela, Jamaica, and the United States, and the secretary-general of the Organisation of American States (OAS).

"We are very much aware of the concerns and issues that have been raised.... We intend to look into them with much greater depth as we evaluate the registration process by the entire mission," Pastor said.

"Our mission is to contribute to the democratic process and to help bridge whatever differences that might exist in order to make sure that the election is as free, fair, and transparent as everyone would like," Pastor added.

Pastor said the council had also been in contact with the Commonwealth secretariat which was "very eager" to co-ordinate its observer mission and monitoring activities with that of the council. The Commonwealth secretariat has also been officially invited to observe the electoral process here.

"I expect that they will be sending a small mission here towards the end of this month," Pastor said.

"It is our mutual desire to avoid duplication between our two missions and to enhance our ability to monitor and observe the elections by doing so."

Desmond Hoyte Lists Achievements as President

FL0404210091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1836 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, April 4, CANA—Guyana President Desmond Hoyte said reforming the controversial electoral system and restoring the country's creditworthiness were the two major achievements of his presidency. Hoyte, speaking to reporters Wednesday, said the abolition of postal and overseas voting and the severe restriction of proxy votes had lent credence to the electoral system.

"All of these were areas in which the opposition alleged that the government had manipulated the elections....." Hoyte said. "I have deepened this process considerably between this year and last year. I have transferred all the formal powers from the minister of home affairs to the elections commission."

Opposition parties have repeatedly accused the government of rigging elections to stay in power. Hoyte has invited foreign observers to monitor preparations for forthcoming elections expected later this year.

Hoyte also cited his government's decision to allow votes to be counted at the place of poll—a longstanding opposition demand for free and fair elections. He said this had never been allowed before in Guyana—not under British colonial rule, or when the current opposition People's Progressive Party (PPP) held office.

"...I have transformed utterly the old arrangement for holding the elections with a view to ensuring that no reasonable person at the end of the day could claim that the elections were manipulated, or not fair."

Hoyte became head of state and government in August 1985 when his predecessor Forbes Burnham died in office.

With the restoration of creditworthiness, Hoyte cited a resumption of bilaterial aid flows, the rescheduling of debts "on the most generous terms that are available now" and inflows of private investment.

"One of the most significant things which have happened is the fact that we have begun to attract Caricom [Caribbean Common Market] investment and I think this tells its own story," he said. "...We have made significant progress during the past five years in trying to put the economy of this country right."

Hoyte however sidestepped the issue of the government's failure to put in place proper mechanisms to cushion the impact of increased hardships stemming from the 1991 budgetary measures, including a devaluation.

"These problems are all inherent in the general economic problems we are facing, one of which is low production and productivity, and ultimately, that is going to be the key to our success," he said.

Hoyte said there was also a need to widen Guyana's economic base by attracting investment in new economic sectors so that more wealth could be generated. He pointed to a 50 per cent across the board wage hike granted to public sector workers and the entire revamping of the income tax regime which saw between 70,000 and 100,000 persons being taken off the tax roll as cushioning measure against the impact of the budget.